

Edward
Mr. GIBBON's

H I S T O R Y

OF THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE,

ABRIDGED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BREVIS ESSE LABORO.

HOR.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR A. STRAHAN; AND T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

MDCCXC.

~~AH 7651.2 R~~
~~I 1357~~ 2 vols

1885. May 1,

Gift of

Miss A. M. Cudworth

of East Boston

(I, II.)

KE 774

BOUND NOV 28 1910

ADVERTISEMENT.

ALTHOUGH but little merit can be ascribed to an abridgment, yet much presumption may be imputed to the present attempt to contract a work that has been received with universal admiration. The author, who now subjects these pages to the perusal of a candid public, is sensible of the delicacy of his situation; but if he has faithfully compressed in two octavos, the principal historical events which elucidate the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, he may claim, and, perhaps, be indulged in the humble praise of industry and accuracy. The striking features of the nations more remotely connected with the subversion of the Roman empire are slightly delineated; part relative to the state of modern Rome is intentionally omitted; and much religious disquisition has been carefully rejected. With what degree of judgment and propriety this has been effected, the reader must determine; but the author flatters himself that what remains will be found instructive to the youthful, and interesting to the curious, mind.

C O N-

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

T HE extent and military force, union and internal prosperity of the Roman Empire, - - - - -	Page 1
---	-----------

CHAPTER II.

Of the constitution of the Roman Empire in the age of the Antonines, - - - - -	35
--	----

CHAPTER III.

The cruelty, follies, and murder of Commodus—Election of Pertinax—His attempts to reform the state—His assassination by the Prætorian guards—Public sale of the empire to Didius Julianus—Clodius Albinus in Britain, Pescennius Niger in Syria, and Septimus Severus in Pannonia, declare against the murderers of Pertinax—Civil wars and victories of Severus over his three rivals, - - - - -	53
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

The death of Severus—Tyranny of Caracalla—Usurpation of Macrinus—Follies of Elagabalus—Virtues and death of Alexander Severus, - - - - -	81
--	----

CHAPTER V.

The elevation and tyranny of Maximin—Civil wars—Violent deaths of Maximin and his son—Of Maximus	A 2
	and

	<i>Page</i>
and Balbinus—And of the three Gordians—Usurpation and secular games of Philip—The state of Persia—The state of Germany, - - - - -	108

CHAPTER VI.

The emperors Decius, Gallus, Æmilianus, Valerian, and Gallienus—The general irruption of the barbarians, - - - - -	133
--	-----

CHAPTER VII.

Reign of Claudius—Defeat of the Goths—Victories, triumph, and death of Aurelian, - - - - -	149
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

Conduct of the army and senate after the death of Aurelian—Reigns of Tacitus, Probus, Carus and his sons, - - - - -	164
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

The reign of Diocletian and his three associates, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius—The Persian war—Abdication and retirement of Diocletian and Maximian, - - - - -	180
---	-----

CHAPTER X.

Death of Constantius—Elevation of Constantine and Maxentius.—Six emperors at the same time—Death of Maximian and Galerius—Victories of Constantine over Maxentius and Licinius.—Re-union of the empire—Progress of the christian religion, - - - - -	199
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.

Foundation of Constantinople—Political system of Constantine—Military discipline—The palace—The finances, - - - - -	231
---	-----

CHAPTER

C O N T E N T S.

ix

C H A P T E R X I I .

	<i>Page</i>
Character of Constantine—Gothic war—Death of Constantine—Division of the empire among his three sons—Persian war—Tragic death of Constantine the Younger, and Constans—Usurpation of Magnentius—Victory of Constantius, - - - - -	248

C H A P T E R X I I I .

Constantius sole emperor—Elevation and death of Gallus—Danger and elevation of Julian—Sarmatian and Persian wars—Victories of Julian in Gaul, - - -	267
---	-----

C H A P T E R X I V .

Legal establishment of the catholic church—Distracted state of the church and empire under Constantine and his sons, - - - - -	285
--	-----

C H A P T E R X V .

Julian is declared emperor by the Legions of Gaul—His march and success—The death of Constantius—Civil administration of Julian—Religion of Julian—His attempts to restore the Pagan worship, - - -	298
---	-----

C H A P T E R X V I .

Expedition of Julian against the Persians—Retreat and death of Julian—Election of Jovian—He saves the Roman army by a disgraceful treaty, - - - -	323
---	-----

C H A P T E R X V I I .

Death of Jovian—Election of Valentinian, who associates his brother Valens, and makes the final division of the eastern and western empires—Revolt of Procopius—Death of Valentinian—His two sons, Gratian and Valentinian II. succeed to the western empire,	347
---	-----

CHAPTER

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

	<i>Page</i>
Manners of the pastoral nations—Progress of the Huns from China to Europe—Flight of the Goths—They pass the Danube—Gothic war—Defeat and death of Valens—Gratian invests Theodosius with the eastern empire—His character and success—Peace and settlement of the Goths, - - - - -	369

CHAPTER XIX.

Death of Gratian—Ruin of Arianism—Civil war against Maximus—Administration of Theodosius—Death of Valentinian II.—Civil war against Eugenius—Death of Theodosius—Destruction of Paganism, - - - - -	394
---	-----

CHAPTER XX.

Division of the Roman empire between the sons of Theodosius—Reign of Arcadius and Honorius—Administration of Rufinus and Stilicho—Revolt and defeat of Gildo in Africa—Revolt of the Goths—Two invasions of Italy by Alaric and Radagastus—They are repulsed by Stilicho—The Germans over-run Gaul—Usurpation of Constantine in the west—Disgrace and death of Stilicho, - - - - -	414
--	-----

CHAPTER XXI.

Invasion of Italy by Alaric—Manners of the Roman people—Rome thrice besieged, and at length pillaged by the Goths—Death of Alaric—The Goths evacuate Italy—Fall of Constantine—Gaul and Spain occupied by Barbarians—Independence of Britain, - -	444
---	-----

CHAPTER

C O N T E N T S.

xi

C H A P T E R XXII.

Arcadius emperor of the east—Administration and disgrace of Eutropius—Revolt of Gainas—Theodosius II. emperor of the east—His sister Pulcheria—His wife Eudocia—The Persian war and division of Armenia—Death of Honorius—Valentinian III. emperor of the west—Administration of his mother Placidia—Ætius and Boniface—Conquest of Africa by the Vandals, - - - - -	Page 466
--	-------------

C H A P T E R XXIII.

Character and conquests of Attila, king of the Huns—Death of Theodosius the younger—Elevation of Marcian to the empire of the east—Invasion of Gaul by Attila—Repulsed by Ætius—Attila invades and evacuates Italy—The deaths of Attila, Ætius, and Valentinian the Third, - - - - -	488
--	-----

C H A P T E R XXIV.

Sack of Rome by Genseric, king of the Vandals—Succession of the last emperors of the west, Maximus, Avitus, Majorian, Severus, Anthemius, Olybrius, Glycerius, Nepos, Augustulus—Extinction of the western empire—Reign of Odoacer, the first barbarian king of Italy—Conversion of the barbarians, - -	517
---	-----

C H A P T E R XXV.

Revolution of Gaul—Reign and conversion of Clovis—Establishment of the French monarchy in Gaul—Laws of the barbarians—State of the Romans—The Visigoths of Spain—Conquest of Britain by the Saxons, - - - - -	545
---	-----

T H E

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT
TIME

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT
TIME

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT
TIME

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT
TIME

CHAPTER V

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT
TIME

THE
DECLINE AND FALL, &c.

CHAPTER I.

**THE EXTENT AND MILITARY FORCE, UNION AND
INTERNAL PROSPERITY OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.**

DURING eight progressive centuries from the first foundation of the City of Rome, her history presents a long and splendid succession of triumphs. In the second century of the christian æra her empire was established over the most desirable part of the known world. The valour which had acquired dominion, enabled her to defend it; and the equitable tenor of her laws, the cultivation of the arts and sciences, reconciled the

provinces to her sway. The Roman senate possessed a nominal authority, but the entire executive power was devolved on the Emperor. Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, with uninterrupted prudence, conducted the administration, and merited the applause of the Roman people. The immediate prosperity of the empire, and the circumstances which, subsequent to the death of Marcus Antoninus, contributed to its Decline and Fall, are the objects of our enquiry.

The earlier ages of Rome are marked by a rapidity of conquest; but the wisdom of Augustus, after he attained the supreme power, first tempered the unbounded rage for universal sovereignty. He considered Rome as having little to gain, and much to lose. An unsuccessful enterprise of his generals in Æthiopia, confirmed him in his pacific intentions; and the defeat of Varus, which ever impressed his mind with settled melancholy, convinced him of the danger of engaging a race of barbarians amidst the woods and morasses of Germany. In his testament he enforced the advice of confining the empire within its natural limits; the Atlantic Ocean, on the west; the Rhine and Danube, on the north; the Euphrates, on the east; and the deserts of Arabia and Africa, on the south.

The

The dissolute disposition of his immediate successors allowed them not to interrupt the pacific system recommended by Augustus. Immerfed in the pleasures of Rome, they regarded with an effeminate averfion the painful toils of war, and the rigid difcipline of the camps. The province of Britain, conquered by the arms of Agricola, was the only acceffion to the Roman empire, during the firft century of chriftianity; but the promotion of Trajan to the imperial dignity, was attended with more ambitious councils, and more warlike meafures. A hardy foldier, and confummate general, he defpifed the moderate maxims of his predeceffors, and afpired to rival the fame of Alexander. The former infolence of the Dacians was chaftifed by the emperor in perfon. The majefty of Rome was vindicated by the unconditional fubmiffion of the barbarians; and their country, about thirteen hundred miles in circumference, formed a new province of the Roman empire. The reftlefs fpirit of Trajan foon impelled him againft the eaft. Parthia fled before his arms, the Tigris wafted his triumphs; and from the mountains of Armenia to the gulph of Perfia he extended his conquelts and glory. Yet the acquifitions of Trajan were more fplendid than folid; the fruits of his victories were abandoned with his life. The prudence or envy of Hadrian,

induced him to relinquish, what he asserted, it was imprudent to retain; and the god Terminus, for the first time, was beheld to recede from his extended boundaries. But though Hadrian possessed not the enterprising temper of Trajan, yet his activity was employed in successive journeys through every province of the empire; and he administered in person that justice, which Antoninus Pius was equally careful in providing for from the neighbourhood of the capital. The reign of Marcus was an incessant struggle against the inroads of the Parthians, and the hostile interruptions of the Germans. The Danube and the Euphrates alternately attested his triumphs; and in a course of signal victories, he exercised that military force, which it is now our object to describe.

In the earlier and more virtuous ages of the common-wealth, the use of arms was confined to the citizens of Rome; they were equally interested in encreasing the territory, or maintaining the glory of the republic. But as dominion was extended, public virtue declined; and the legions, though supposed to consist of Roman citizens, were recruited from the distant provinces. The officers were, generally, men of birth and education; but the common soldiers, allured by the hopes of gain, answered to the mercenary levies
of

of modern times. The spirit of patriotism which had actuated the free armies of the state during the period of its purity, which had rendered their fortitude invincible, no longer existed; other motives equally powerful, though not equally pure, were to be substituted for subsidized hirelings. The peasant, or mechanic, was taught to consider the profession of arms with a degree of veneration: his reputation was to depend upon his own valour; and he considered the corps in which he served as, in some measure, suffering from the infamy he laboured under, or partaking of the glory he acquired. On his first entrance, an oath was administered to him of allegiance and obedience; and to abandon his standard in the hour of danger, was not considered less ignominious than impious. Thus honour and religion bound him to the faithful discharge of his duty; while a regular pay, and a certain recompence, after the stated time of service, assured present subsistence and future ease. To these incentives was added the fear of chastisement; and cowardice or disobedience was, unexceptionably, destined to exemplary punishment. The authority of the centurions extended to every severity short of death; the power of inflicting the last was reserved to the general. A rigid perseverance in this system had rendered the Imperial troops firm though do-

cile; and the Roman soldiers dreaded their officers more than the enemy.

Yet the Romans were not less sensible of the effects of skill and practice, than the advantages of valour. In their language, the very name of an army was borrowed from the word which signified exercise. Military evolutions were practised with unremitting attention. The hoary veteran and experienced recruit were equally compelled to daily repetition; and the first was not suffered to forget, what the last was instructed to acquire. Their limbs were continually burthened with arms, and the weight they were accustomed to bear in peaceful preparation doubled what was necessary in real action. The body was strengthened by continual exertions, and rendered active by incessant motion. To run, leap, and swim, were considered as important parts of their duty; and even their amusements in the Pyrrhic dance, gave grace to their steps, and agility to their movements. The greatest Emperors did not think it beneath them to instruct the ignorant, or review the experienced; and even Hadrian, as well as Trajan, is recorded as disputing in these exercises, the prize of strength and dexterity. The science of Tactics, under their auspices, was industriously cultivated, and their in-

struc-

structions have since been regarded as a perfect model of Roman discipline.

Time had gradually introduced amongst the troops many alterations and improvements ; and the legion of Trajan and Hadrian materially differed from that described by Polybius. The former consisted of ten cohorts of heavy armed infantry, divided into fifty-five companies, under the orders of a correspondent number of tribunes and centurions. The first cohort, which claimed the post of honour, was composed of eleven hundred and five chosen soldiers ; the remaining nine, of five hundred and fifty-five : Thus, the whole body of the infantry amounted to six thousand one hundred. Their arms were uniform ; an open helmet, with a lofty crest ; a coat of mail ; greaves on their legs ; and on their left arm a buckler, framed of light wood, covered with a bull's hide, and guarded with plates of brass ; a light spear, and a ponderous javelin called the pilum, the length of which was about six feet, terminated by a triangular point of steel of eighteen inches ; the sword was short and double edged, suited alike to cut or thrust ; and the soldier in action was wisely instructed to prefer the latter use of it. The legion was drawn up eight deep, and the regular distance of three feet was left between the files and ranks.

The cavalry, without which this body would have been imperfect, was divided into ten squadrons; the first consisted of a hundred and thirty-two men, the other nine only of sixty-six: the whole amounted to seven hundred and twenty-six. These were formerly the noblest youths of Rome and Italy; but during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian were drawn from the same class of subjects as the infantry. Their horses were generally from Spain or Cappadocia; but the arms of the Roman troops were less cumbersome than those of the East; a helmet, an oblong shield, light boots, and a coat of mail, defended them from the attacks of their enemies; a javelin and a long broad sword were the weapons with which they assailed them,

Though Rome chiefly confided for her glory and security in the legions, yet considerable levies were regularly made among the provincials. Neighbouring and dependent potentates and states held their territories and freedom by a military tenure. The hardy body of the Barbarian was dedicated to the service of the empire; and the natural enemies of Rome were compelled, or persuaded to employ their strength, and lavish their lives in support of her glory, and the defence of her dominions. All these were known by the general name of Auxiliaries. The bravest and most faithful

faithful of the bands were placed under the command of Præfects and Centurions, and severely trained in the arts of Roman discipline; but the greater part retained the arms and exercise of their native country, and were permitted to continue the mode of warfare they had been accustomed to from early infancy. A certain proportion of these Auxiliaries was allotted to every legion; and ten military engines of the largest, and fifty-five of a smaller size, rendered it complete within itself, and equally capable of undertaking the operations of a siege, as it was before of disputing the field of battle.

The camp of a Roman legion was alike celebrated for its perfect regularity, as the soldiers were for the exactness of their discipline. Its form was a quadrangle; and a square of about seven hundred yards, we may calculate, was sufficient space for the encampment of twenty thousand men. The prætorium, or General's tent, in the middle, rose above the rest; distinct and different quarters were occupied by the Cavalry, Infantry, and Auxiliaries. The streets were broad, and between the tents and surrounding rampart was left a vacancy of two hundred feet: the height of the rampart was generally twelve feet, defended by a ditch of the same depth and breadth, and further secured by a strong line of palisades. The
legions

legions, early inured to labour, were accustomed to fortify their camp with their own hands, and were taught to consider the use of the pick-axe and spade equally necessary with the javelin or sword. When the signal of departure was given by sound of trumpet, the soldiers fell silently into their ranks, without delay or confusion. To the weight of their arms, were added kitchen furniture, the instruments of fortification, and provision for several days; yet, beneath this accumulated burthen, they were trained to march usually twenty miles within six hours. On the appearance of an enemy, they disencumbered themselves of their baggage, and readily ranged themselves into order of battle: The slingers and archers in the van, the military engines in the rear; the auxiliaries formed the first line, the legions the second, and the cavalry covered the flanks.

Such were the arts by which the Romans extended their conquests, and attained the palm of victory; and the concurring testimonies of different authors, enable us to describe them with precision. But when we turn from their discipline to their numbers, we must indulge surmise, and hazard conjecture. The legion, with its attendant auxiliaries, might consist of about twelve thousand five hundred men; the standing army of Hadrian and his successors was composed of
thirty

thirty legions, and the aggregate amount will consequently be three hundred and seventy-five thousand men. The stations of these along the frontiers of the empire were generally fixed and permanent; and the distribution of them, as far as history enables us to decide, was probably in the following proportion. Three legions were assigned to Britain; the Rhine and Danube were defended by sixteen: of these, two protected the Lower, and three the Upper Germany; one in Rhætia, one in Noricum, four in Pannonia, three in Mæssia, and two in Dacia. The banks of the Euphrates were guarded by eight legions, six in Syria, and two in Cappadocia; Egypt, Africa, and Spain, remote from danger, each maintained but a single legion; and the security of Italy was provided for by the City cohorts and Pretorian guards, in number about twenty thousand, armed and accoutred similar to the legions, and differing from them only in more relaxed discipline.

The navy of Rome would have appeared in the eye of modern Europe, far inadequate to her greatness, and unworthy of her Empire: but the ambition of the Romans was confined to the land; nor did they possess that enterprizing spirit of navigation, so necessary to the establishment of a maritime power. In the Punic wars a naval force had been formed with difficulty, and was at last crowned

crowned with success; and the imprudence of Antony risked his fame and fortune on the engagement at Actium. Yet the Romans never could be induced to consider the sea as their proper department; and though their dominion over it was extensive and undisputed, they still continued to regard the ocean as an object rather of terror than curiosity: the policy of their Emperors extended no farther than to secure the peaceful navigation of it; and content with protecting the necessary commerce of their subjects, they cautiously refrained from exploring the remote coasts of the unfrequented main. Two fleets were stationed by Augustus in the most convenient ports of Italy; the one at Ravenna on the Adriatic, the other at Misenum in the bay of Naples. These fleets were composed of gallies of two or three ranks of oars, and to each of the squadrons he attached several thousand marines. A naval force was also maintained at Frejus, on the coast of Provence, and the Euxine was guarded by forty ships and three thousand soldiers. The communication between Gaul and Britain, and the navigation of the Rhine and Danube were also secured by an adequate armament. If we therefore add the probable numbers contained in the Roman fleets to the computed account of their land army, we may fix the establishment of the Roman Empire by sea and land

land at four hundred and fifty thousand men. We shall now endeavour to describe the situation and extent of the provinces this establishment was allotted to defend.

Spain, limited by the Pyrenæan mountains, the Mediterranean, and the Atlantic Ocean, was divided by Augustus into three provinces; Lusitania, Betica, and Tarraconensis. The first comprised the greatest part of the kingdom of Portugal; Grenada and Andalusia correspond with the second; and the remainder of Spain formed the last, which from the name of its capital was called Tarragona, and was considered as the most considerable of the Roman governments.

Spain.

Gaul, contained the whole country between the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Rhine, and the Ocean; besides the present dominions of France, it included the Dutchy of Savoy, the cantons of Switzerland, the four electorates of the Rhine, and the territories of Liege, Luxemburgh, Hainault, Flanders, and Brabant. Augustus, in the distribution of the legions, introduced a division of Gaul. The colony of Narbonne gave its name to the tract of land which stretches along the coast of the Mediterranean, Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphiné. Aquitaine extended from the Pyrenees to the Loire; from the

Gaul.

the Loire to the Seine was Celtic Gaul, soon known by the title of the Lyonnese. The Belgic, which lay beyond the Seine, had been in earlier times bounded only by the Rhine ; but the Germans having by their valour conquered part of the Belgic territory, the frontier from Basil to Leyden was distinguished by the names of the Upper and the Lower Germany. Thus, at the accession of Antoninus, the six provinces of Gaul were, the Narbonnese, Aquitaine, the Lyonnese, the Belgic, and the two Germanies.

Britain. In Britain the Romans possessed the entire dominion of England, Wales, and the Lowlands of Scotland, as far as the Friths of Dunbarton and Edinburgh.

Italy. To that part of Europe originally styled Italy, the Romans by conquest annexed what is now known by the name of Lombardy ; Genoa was inhabited by the Ligurians, Venice was yet unborn ; but the Venetians then held that portion of their domains, which lies to the east of the Adige. The Etruscans and the Umbrians possessed the middle part of the peninsula, now the Duchy of Tuscany and the ecclesiastical state. From the Tyber to the frontiers of Naples was once the country of the Sabines, the Latins, and the Volsci ; Capua and Campania are now the territory of Naples ; the Marfi, the Samnites,

nites, the Apulians, and the Lucanians divided the rest of the kingdom.

The Rhine and the Danube bounded the Roman provinces in Europe; the stream of the latter rises within thirty miles of the former, and its course towards the south gradually increases in depth and rapidity till it discharges its accumulated waters into the Euxine Sea. The provinces it protects were generally known by the appellation of Illyricum, and are particularized by the names of Rhætia, Noricum, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Mæsia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece. The greatest part of the province of Rhætia acknowledges the sovereignty of the Elector of Bavaria; the rest, the free city of Augsburgh excepted, is the property of the House of Austria, whose dominions also include Noricum and Pannonia, now styled Austria, Styria, Carenthia, Carniola, the Lower Hungary, and Sclavonia. Dalmatia is partly subject to Venice, and the rest to the republic of Ragusa; the more inland parts are divided between the House of Austria and the Porte, under the appellations of Croatia and Bosnia. Hungary has annexed to her territory part of Dacia, to the left of the Danube; whilst the remainder, with the whole province of Mæsia, are subject to the Turkish government. Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece are possessed by the same power,

power, and distinguished by the title of Romelia. It is not unworthy to pause a moment here, and reflect on the fate of nations, and the transient prosperity of empires. Greece, the land of freedom, the parent of heroes, the nurse of philosophers, who when she bowed before the victorious arms, refined the taste of Rome, is sunk the slave of barbarous superstition, and ignorant despotism; whilst the successors of Alexander, whose rapid victories overturned the Persian monarchy, and deluged Asia with blood, are doomed to sooth the pride, and feed the avarice of some upstart Turkish Bashaw! The acquisitions of Lucullus and Pompey, in Asia, and even the fleeting conquests of Trajan, have all yielded to the fierce followers of Mahomet, and form part of the dominions of the Ottoman Porte. Syria, once the seat of royalty, and long the eastern frontier of the Roman empire, attracts only the curiosity of the traveller, or exercises the speculations of the philosopher; whilst Phenicia and Palestine, deserted and destitute, seem but to exist in their former reputation. It is needless to remind the reader, we owe the useful and elegant invention of letters to the first, and the pure doctrine of the christian religion to the last. Egypt, renowned for mystic science and splendid literary pre-eminence, now groans beneath the iron rod of delegated

gated authority, and is an appendage to the Turkish government; her redundant Nile overflows to fill the coffers of capricious tyranny and sanguinary oppression. On the coast of Africa, Carthage, formerly the rival of Rome, is possessed by the States of Tripoli and Tunis; Numidia, once the kingdom of the celebrated Masinissa and the crafty Jugurtha, obeys the arbitrary nod of the Dey of Algiers. Fez is the Mauritania of the ancients; and the ruins of a city founded by the Romans, are still to be discerned amidst dominions doomed to experience the savage ferocity of the Emperor of Morocco. Of the islands which acknowledged the authority of Rome, Majorca and Minorca both belong to Spain; Sardinia and Sicily are governed by Italian Princes; Corsica has been subdued, and almost depopulated, by the ambition of France; the rest have submitted to the victorious arms of the Turks, except Malta, which still continues to baffle the force and brave the indignation of the Ottoman power. But though so many powerful kingdoms, founded on the wreck of provinces once tributary to Rome, must impress us with admiration and astonishment, yet we cannot permit to pass unnoticed her vanity, in confounding her empire with the extent of the globe of the earth. From the most accurate survey of it, we may calculate the Roman empire to

have extended three thousand miles in length, and two thousand in breadth; an astonishing territory, when we also consider it comprized the most fertile and best cultivated part of the known world: yet the union and internal prosperity of Rome, during the age of the Antonines, though they may not excite the same immediate sensation of surprize, will be equally worthy the enquiry of the historian, and the attention of the philosopher. The wisdom and equity of the laws united the provinces in ready obedience to the Roman sway; a temporary deviation from them might perhaps harass or oppress for a moment, but the welfare of the public soon induced the restoration of a system framed to promote the general happiness and tranquillity. The arts and sciences, encouraged and rewarded with a liberal hand, adorned and informed those realms which discipline and valour had subdued; the natives and inhabitants mingled with the Romans; they were permitted to enjoy unmolested, the religious tenets of their ancestors, and might indiscriminately aspire to, and partake the honours and advantages of their conquerors. The religion of Rome, though founded in error, conduced in no trivial degree to establish unanimity; the multitude of deities, and various modes of worship which were universally tolerated, precluded discordant

cordant controversy, and cherished mutual indulgence. The sages who had enlightened by their knowledge, the heroes who had advanced by their courage, the fame and reputation of their country, were readily enrolled amongst the gods; and a glorious death was frequently supposed to transform the expiring warrior into an immortal divinity. The Italian who revered the majesty of Jupiter in the capitol, derided not the Persian, who prostrated himself before the dawning rays of the sun. The purer light of christianity enables us to detect the fallacy of this multifarious worship, and we cannot but smile at a religion where every vice, as well as virtue, had its respective altar and protecting deity.

The philosophers, indifferent to the modes of worship and sensible of the imperfections of heathen mythology, confined their speculations to the nature of man. The four most celebrated schools consisted of the Stoics and Platonists, the Academics and Epicureans. Of the two first, the Stoic philosopher indulged in the contemplation of original matter, whilst the disciple of Plato inculcated the idea of immateriality. Of the two last, the modest Academic was lost in scepticism, but the hardier follower of Epicurus denied the providence of a supreme power; yet, though in their writings and conversation they asserted the dig-

nity of reason, they all concurred in accommodating to the commands of law and custom: they practised ceremonies they daily ridiculed, and frequented the temples of gods, whose existence they rejected. The magistrates, from the nature of their education, early imbibed the principles of philosophy; and as they valued religion only as connected with civil government, and were convinced that in every country the form of superstition, sanctioned by time and experience, was best adapted to the climate and inhabitants, no motive remained for narrow-minded persecution. Avarice might sometimes induce them to despoil the temples of the vanquished, but the statue of the deity was safe, unless fashioned by the hand of taste, or ornamented by the ostentatious zeal of opulence. The power of the Druids in Gaul, as politically dangerous, was suppressed by successive Emperors; human sacrifices were interdicted, but the more inoffensive mode of worship, with the doctrines and altars, were retained with impunity. In Rome indeed, the capital of this vast monarchy, restrictions frequently were imposed on this variety of foreign rites; the mystic superstition of Egypt was often prohibited; the propagators of it, and profelytes to it, repeatedly banished. But this limitation of exotic devotion was not peculiar to the mistress of the empire; every

every city possessed the same prerogative of limiting or excluding alien ceremonies, and preserving the purity of its own. Under the Flavian family a more enlarged policy took place, and the gods of every nation enjoyed their temples, and accepted the offerings of their followers in unmolested magnificence, amidst the tutelar deities of Rome.

But no inconsiderable portion of Roman success is to be ascribed to the policy with which she adopted virtue and merit for her own. The pride of Sparta and Athens, in maintaining the purity of their citizens, had hastened their inevitable decline amidst the triumph of their victories; but the sagacity and ambition of Rome opened her arms to every useful quality; and the ingenious slave, or enterprising barbarian, was equally allowed to partake the advantages of naturalization. The indulgence she scorned to be compelled to, she liberally bestowed; the Samnites and Lucanians acquired by her favour, what they had not been able to attain by their arms; and the privileges of Rome, at last, were extended to all the inhabitants of the empire. Yet the progress of this undistinguishing extension was slow, and the wisest emperors guarded with vigilant jealousy the dignity of the Roman name. Italy long continued to claim at least the residence of the Emperors and the Senate; and an exemption from taxes and arbitrary governors was

the recompense of early and former virtue. The provinces, the colonies, and municipal towns were tardily and cautiously associated in the advantages of the parent state; and even in the time of the Antonines we find the freedom of the city accompanied with very solid benefits: the security of the Roman laws in the important articles of marriage, testaments, and inheritances, and the road of fortune opened to the footsteps of aspiring capacity or ambitious merit. Nor were the Romans insensible of the influence of language, but endeavoured to extend with their arms the use of the Latin tongue. The west received the impressions of knowledge and politeness with facility; throughout Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain and Pannonia, the language of Virgil and Cicero was successfully imitated, and generally adopted; but Greece maintained a more fastidious reserve, and vain of native institutions and literary reputation, despised the manners of those whose arms she was unable to resist. A variety of Grecian colonies, extending from the Hadriatic to the Euphrates and Nile, diffused her language and sentiments; and Rome herself acknowledged the elegance of the latter, though her jealousy inflexibly excluded the use of the former. The natives of Syria and Egypt, both fully effeminate and sullenly ferocious, preserved their original dialects, and secluded

secluded themselves with persevering obstinacy from the polished arts of society and the proffered advantages of commerce; in the reign of Septimius Severus, an Egyptian was first admitted into the Roman senate.

But amidst the general prosperity which marked the nations of the empire, one unhappy condition of men is entitled to our consideration and pity. In the earlier ages of Rome, the domestic slaves consisted of barbarian captives, taken by the chance of war, and purchased at a trifling price; but when the dominion of Rome had embraced the greatest part of the habitable globe, the source of supply flowed with less abundance, and the Romans were reduced to the more tedious method of propagation: the value of the slave was consequently enhanced, and interest induced the master to treat with humanity what formed so considerable a part of his property. The edicts of Hadrian and the Antonines extended the protection of the laws to this miserable race of mankind; and the power of life and death, long exercised and abused, was taken out of private hands, and entrusted with the magistrates. On an appeal to the tribunal of justice, a proof of improper treatment was productive of freedom, or at least a change of masters. Nor were they entirely deprived of the consolation of hope; en-

franchisement was frequently the reward of a few years diligence and fidelity. The slave acquired with his liberty an admission into the political society of which his master was a member; but this distinction was confined to such as were solemnly enfranchised with the approbation of the magistrate, and even these were excluded from civil and military honours; nor were the traces of servility obliterated till the third or fourth generation. The number of Roman slaves has never been calculated with any degree of precision; we can only observe, that in the time of Augustus, a freed-man whose fortune had been greatly impaired by the civil wars, left behind him four thousand one hundred and sixteen slaves; and we may also infer the prodigious amount of them from the intention of distinguishing them by a peculiar habit being laid aside, lest they should become acquainted with their own strength.

Nor is it a matter of less difficulty to ascertain with accuracy, the number of subjects which submitted to the laws of Rome. When Claudius was censor, the Roman citizens amounted to six millions nine hundred and forty-five thousand; and if we add an adequate proportion of women and children, we cannot estimate them at less than twenty millions of souls. The provincials might probably amount to double the number, and the
slaves

slaves possibly equalled the aggregate account of citizens and free inhabitants : these together, will swell the whole to one hundred and twenty millions of persons ; but this, like every other calculation of the kind, must chiefly be the offspring of conjecture.

The different nations accustomed to obedience, were at last blended into one great people ; and the vanquished resigned the hope, and even the wish of resuming their independence. Domestic peace and internal quiet promoted the embellishment of dominions acquired by turbulent ambition and destructive conquest ; and the prince and people, delivered from the toils of war, devoted their leisure and wealth to improve and adorn the Roman empire. The ravages of time and barbarism have not entirely effaced the marks of Roman magnificence ; and the ruins scattered over the face of Italy, proclaim the opulence and splendour of the mistress of the world. The temples of Mars and Jupiter, the porticoes of Livia and Octavia, with the public libraries, and the theatre of Marcellus, prove the elegant taste of Augustus ; and the capacious soul of his friend Agrippa is portrayed in the immortal monument of the Pantheon. The œconomy of Vespasian yielded to the laudable desire of ornamenting the capital ; and the works of Trajan are descriptive of his lofty and
com-

commanding genius. Hadrian not only patronised the arts, but was an artist himself; and the Antonines equally encouraged the design of the architect and the chissel of the statuary, with the learning of the sage and the precepts of the philosopher. Private liberality was awakened by imperial magnificence; Pliny's letters attest his unremitting attention and extensive donations to works of public utility and grandeur; and Herodes Atticus, a private citizen of Athens, is recorded to have contributed three hundred myriads of drachms (about a hundred thousand pounds) towards the construction of an aqueduct at Trqas. The ruins of the Stadium at Athens still preserve the fame of his taste, and are a broken monument of his munificence; whilst Corinth, Delphi, and Thermopylæ, in the erection of baths, theatres, and temples, declare the astonishing and almost incredible amount of his treasures. Yet during the common-wealths of Athens and Rome, the skill of the artist and the opulence of the citizen were dedicated solely to public ornament. The modest simplicity of private houses was agreeably contrasted with the grandeur of public edifices; and whilst the contracted and unadorned retreats of domestic life bespoke the equality, the lofty and superb temples of the gods proclaimed the piety of the people: even when Rome yielded to the
sceptre

sceptre of monarchy, the spirit which formerly impelled the free citizen of the republic was still to be discerned in the majestic structures of the dependent subject. The most virtuous of the emperors displayed their superiority in stupendous works of national honour ; and the proud designs of native architecture were adorned by the most beautiful productions of Grecian painting and sculpture. The Forum of Trajan was in form a quadrangle, and was surrounded with a portico. The column of marble in the middle, exhibited an exact representation of his Dacian victories ; and the height of it, one hundred and ten feet, was the same with the hill which had been removed to erect it. But the solidity of execution in constructing, and the useful purposes they were destined to, give the aqueducts a preference over the other monuments of Roman genius and power ; and the distant plains of Asia and Africa, once covered with flourishing cities, derived their supplies of fresh water from these immense and artificial resources.

We have already attempted to compute the inhabitants, and describe the public works of the Roman empire ; it now remains to explore the number and greatness of her cities. The scattered fragments of history afford a doubtful light to guide our researches ; and we must be cautious,
left

left we are betrayed into error by the vanity of the historian, or the inaccuracy of his language. Ancient Italy is said to have contained eleven hundred and ninety-seven cities; and we have reason to imagine it equally populous in the age of the Antonines, with any period before or after. The remains of Verona still bear testimony to its former grandeur; yet Verona was considered as inferior to Aquileia, Padua, Milan, or Ravenna.

Britain had already begun to emerge from rude obscurity. York was the seat of government, and received the last breath of the Emperor Severus. London asserted the superiority of her situation for commerce; and Bath, as now, was celebrated for her salubrious waters and medicinal springs. Twelve hundred cities overspread the face of Gaul; yet, if we are to judge from the state of Paris, the northern parts could boast but little splendor. The southern provinces indeed rivalled the elegance of Italy; and Marseilles, Narbonne, Thoulouse, Bourdeaux, Lyons, Treves, and Vienna displayed an appearance of wealth and prosperity, perhaps not to be surpassed by their present condition. Spain has little to attract the curiosity or admiration of the traveller but what she owes to the magnificence of antiquity; and the eye employed in tracing the ruins of ancient architecture, is seldom diverted from its object by the

the admiration of modern grandeur. Pliny, in a minute account of it, distinguishes no less than three hundred and sixty cities; and the pains bestowed in the respective description of each city, will not permit us to doubt the authenticity of it. The authority of Carthage, in Africa, was extended over three hundred cities; nor is it probable their numbers declined, when annexed to the dominion of Rome. In Asia, the wandering Arab or oppressed peasant finds shelter amidst the ruin of palaces; and that barbarism which has desolated the land, has preserved from depredation the stately structures of the ancients. Five hundred cities, embellished with every refinement of art, once adorned this quarter of the globe; and among these Pergamus, Smyrna, and Ephesus long disputed with each other the titular primacy of Asia. Antioch and Alexandria, the capitals of Syria and Egypt, yielded only to the imperial majesty of Rome.

The roads which connected these cities with each other, were formed and maintained with care and attention; regular mile stones ascertained the intermediate distance, and mountains were intersected, and arches thrown over rivers, to render the communication convenient. These precautions not only promoted an easy intercourse, but also facilitated the march of the legions, nor was any province

province considered as completely subdued, till open on every side to access.

The Emperors, conscious of the utility of receiving intelligence, and conveying their orders with rapidity, established regular posts throughout their dominions; houses were erected at the distance of five or six miles from each other, and every house was provided with forty horses; but the use of them was generally confined to those who travelled with the Imperial mandate. The Emperor Claudius constructed the port of Ostia, at the mouth of the Tyber; from Rome to Ostia was but sixteen miles, and a favourable breeze from this port carried vessels in seven days to the Columns of Hercules, and in ten to Alexandria; and the communication by sea was equally open as by land.

The productions of the east, long the seat of art and luxury, were gradually introduced into the western countries of Europe. Agriculture was extended, and the warlike disposition of the rude barbarian gave place to the labour of husbandry and a general spirit of industry; almost all the flowers, fruits and herbs which adorn European gardens, were imported from foreign climates. Sicily produced the vine in the time of Homer, but it was unimproved by skill, and the juice harsh and unpalatable; yet in the time of Pliny, Rome was celebrated

celebrated for the superior flavour of her wines. This blessing was soon communicated throughout Gaul, and there is reason to suppose the vineyards of Burgundy were planted in the age of the Antonines. The olive was cultivated with similar attention and equal success, and from Italy and Africa spread through Spain and Gaul; to the latter of these, flax, the growth of Egypt, was also transported. Artificial grasses, particularly the lucerne, assured a plentiful supply for the flocks and herds. Mines were explored, and fisheries established; and whilst they contributed to the wealth and luxury of the rich, afforded subsistence to the industrious poor.

With agriculture, manufactures increased; the materials of nature were fabricated by the hand of art; and though many of these refinements were arraigned as superfluous and pernicious, yet the pleasures of the opulent are a voluntary tax for the benefit of the diligent mechanic, and the skilful artist; and it is not till the circulation is extended beyond the limits of the empire, that it becomes dangerous: yet the luxury of Rome was not to be confined within these bounds, however ample. Furs from Scythia, and carpets from Babylon; amber from the shores of the Baltic to the Danube, and precious stones, silk, and aromatics from the east, were purchased with the silver, or exchanged

exchanged for the gold of the empire. The annual loss of this trade has been computed at eight hundred thousand pounds sterling; yet disadvantageous as it seems, the produce of the mines abundantly supplied the demands of commerce. But though the tranquil and plentiful state of the empire was felt and confessed by the provincials as well as Romans, though the latent causes of decay and corruption might escape the eye of contemporaries, yet Rome was gradually declining, and slowly verging towards dissolution. A secret poison had been introduced by long peace and lethargic inactivity into the very bowels of the empire. Military spirit no longer existed; the fire of enterprize was extinguished, and the commanding genius of Rome forsook the polluted habitations of a luxurious and effeminate people. The improvement of arts, whilst it refined, had gradually enervated the country; the splendour of their cities served only to allure the impending rapacity of a hardy race of barbarians. The natives of part of Europe were still indeed brave and robust; and though Italy, sunk in sloth, trembled at the sound of the trumpet, yet Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Illyricum supplied the legions with excellent soldiers. But even these no longer were animated by that public courage, the offspring of independence, and the child of national honour;

honour ; and the severe discipline and personal valour of a mercenary army were entrusted with the important defence of the empire. The most daring and ambitious resorted to the standard of the emperors, and royal favor or discernment proportioned the reward of the soldier, or gratified the expectations of his leader.

The love of letters, by the patronage and encouragement of Hadrian and the Antonines, was diffused throughout the extent of the empire. The northern shores of Britain acknowledged the charms, and courted the embraces of rhetoric ; whilst the remote banks of the Rhine and Danube resounded with the glowing lines of Homer and Virgil. The Greeks successfully cultivated the sciences of physic and astronomy ; and the productions of Ptolemy and Galen are yet respected and consulted : yet the fire of original genius no longer invigorated with its warmth, or astonished with its lustre. Cold and servile imitations characterized the indolence of the age, and a body without vigour contained a mind without imagination ; the uniform system of foreign education fettered the expressions and fancy of the provincials, and the natives of Italy were content to admire, instead of endeavouring to emulate the merits of their ancestors. During this unproductive period the inimitable humour of Lucian alone claims

the praise of original composition. The tenets of the ancient philosophers were received with blind deference and unqualified submission; the name of poet was almost forgotten, and the artificial sophist assumed the seat of the energetic orator.

About the middle of the third century of the christian æra, the sublime Longinus, a native of the effeminate east, and the slave of female despotism, with a genius superior to birth or situation, thus laments the degeneracy of his contemporaries. "In the same manner (says he) as some children always remain pigmies, whose infant limbs have been too closely confined; thus our tender minds, fettered by the prejudices and habits of a just-servitude, are unable to expand themselves, or to attain that well proportioned greatness which we admire in the ancients; who living under a popular government, wrote with the same freedom as they acted." The race of Romans had been long sinking below the old standard of mankind; it was reserved for the gigantic strangers from the north to improve the pigmy breed, and with the restoration of freedom to cultivate the productions of taste, and disseminate the seeds of science.

CHAPTER II.

**OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE
IN THE AGE OF THE ANTONINES.**

IN whatever state an individual unites in his person the execution of the laws, the command of the army, and the management of the revenue, that state may be termed a monarchy; the name assumed by the superior thus invested is of little consequence to the public; nor will it avail whether this aggregated trust is devolved on a Dictator, a Triumvir, or a King. The ambition of the first had subverted the Roman constitution; the cruelty of the second had deluged the empire with blood: but the spirit and prejudice of the people still revolted against the title of the third. The victory of Actium had bestowed the sole power over the Roman world on Octavius, furna-

med Cæsar by his uncle, and Augustus by the senate. Forty-four veteran legions served beneath his banners, and were attached to his family and person. The provinces, weary of the oppressive ministers of the republic, were willing to submit to the authority of a single master; the populace were thoughtless and necessitous, and satisfied with the donations and pleased with the shews of Augustus, were ready to applaud and support his elevation. The greatest part of the senate had fallen on the field of battle, or perished in proscriptions, and the remainder survived equally without power or dignity; and during the various vicissitudes of civil war, a multitude, as party or interest dictated, had been gratified with the name of senator.

To reform this mixed assembly was the first virtuous measure of Augustus. He was elected censor, and with Agrippa expelled some, persuaded a greater number to retire, and raised the qualification for that honour to about ten thousand pounds. For himself he chose the title of prince of the senate, and pronounced before it a studied oration, in which he lamented the necessity of former severity, represented the dangerous disposition of Antony, and declared "That now he was
" at liberty to satisfy his duty and his inclination,
" he solemnly restored the senate and people to
" all their ancient rights; and wished only to
" mingle

“ mingle with the crowd of his fellow-citizens, and
“ to share the blessings which he had obtained for
“ his country.”

Whatever were the real sentiments of the senate, however it might be divided in opinion between the advantages of a monarchy and a republic, yet the answer was unanimous and decisive. The resignation of Augustus was rejected; he was intreated not to desert the republic which he had saved; and after a decent resistance, was persuaded to accept as pro-consul and imperator, the government of the provinces, and the command of the armies. At his own desire this authority was limited to the term of ten years; and frequently renewed at the stated period, gave occasion to future emperors to solemnize every tenth year of their reign.

The power of the Roman general over his soldiers was unlimited; the dictator or consul could command the service of the Roman youth, but in his camp the general possessed an absolute jurisdiction without even the form of trial; and though the choice of the enemies of Rome was decided by the legislative authority, yet at a distance from Italy the commanders directed the arms of the legions against whatever people, and in whatever manner they pleased. In the use of victory, after the appointment of commissioners was abolished,

they were bounded only by their discretion ; and in the instance of Pompey, when he commanded in the east, kingdoms divided, colonies founded, and princes dethroned, were ratified by a single act of the senate and people. To this power of the generals over the soldiers and enemies of Rome may be added the civil and military government of the provinces they conquered.

As it was impossible for Augustus personally to command the legions stationed in so many different quarters of the world, he was indulged with the power of devolving his authority on his lieutenants ; these were the representatives of the emperor, and his commands alone were acknowledged or obeyed throughout the whole Roman empire. The præfecture of Egypt only was committed to a Roman knight. With this single exception, the provinces were governed, and the armies commanded by members of the senate.

In a few days after Augustus had accepted this liberal grant, he gratified the pride of the senate by resigning to the administration of the civil magistrate the more peaceful and secure provinces ; and in this division he assigned to the pro-consuls of that assembly an honourable precedence over his own lieutenants : but a law was passed that the presence of the emperor should supercede every other authority. The new conquests also were allotted

lotted to the imperial portion ; and by these clauses the real power of the prince was equally extended over every part of the empire. Even in the capital he was permitted to support a body of guards, and to preserve his military command ; and though the last was restricted to those engaged in the service by oath, yet the knights, the magistrates, and the senators, eager for slavery and enamoured of dishonour, courted and voluntarily accepted the degrading protestation.

Augustus, though he established his empire on a military force, condescended to reign under names of ancient magistracy. In his own person he combined the powers of the consular and tribunitian offices. The consuls formerly regulated the ceremonies of religion, the levies and command of the armies, the correspondence with foreign states, and the control of the finances. The tribunes might be considered as the representatives of the people ; and each of them could by the single word *veto*, impede and entirely restrain the resolutions of government. Nor did the dignities of supreme pontiff and censor escape the vigilant policy of Augustus ; the former gave him the entire management of the religion, the latter the inspection of the fortunes and morals of the people ; and as if these powers were insufficient, the emperors were finally authorized to execute

whatsoever they should judge advantageous to the empire, whether private or public, human or divine.

The emperor thus possessed of every branch of the executive power, to the magistrates of the common-wealth was left the shadow of a name without dignity or substance. The arts of Augustus induced him to preserve the ancient forms of the administration; but though he allowed to his nominal coadjutors the ensigns of office, he carefully precluded them from the exercise of ancient authority: yet vanity still coveted the honours of titular superiority, and the emperors, to dignify the acceptance, frequently condescended to share them with their subjects. The moderation or timidity of the crafty Augustus left the elections to the free votes of the people: but it is ascribed to his councils, that in the subsequent reign of Tiberius they were instantly transferred to the senate; and the emperors were delivered from a turbulent and inconsiderate multitude, who without the probability of restoring liberty, might have endangered the tranquillity of the state.

The senate was by Augustus preferred to the people as the more tractable instrument of dominion; his successors adopted his sentiments, and founded their empire on the dignity of that assembly; even in the exercise of their own powers they fre-

frequently consulted the great national councils, and the vanity of the Patricians was soothed with being allowed to approve whilst they were no longer permitted to decide. With regard to civil objects, the senate still remained the supreme court of appeal, and found a frequent and serious occupation in the distribution of justice. The spirit of ancient eloquence is still to be discerned in the causes pleaded before it; and its decisions extended to all offences that affected the peace and majesty of the Roman people. In its legislative capacity, in which it was supposed virtually to represent the people, it apparently possessed the rights of sovereignty; and it continued, in appearance, to sanction authority and ratify the laws. In its debates the emperors voted and divided with seeming equality; and whilst they possessed an uncontrouled dominion were prudent enough to conceal their irresistible strength, and sufficiently humble to profess themselves the accountable ministers of the senate.

In the maintenance of their court, the sovereigns of Rome (a few capricious tyrants excepted) preserved a suitable appearance of decency and moderation; pomp and ceremony were carefully avoided: they affected to confound themselves with their subjects; they returned their visits and accepted their invitations. Their palace, table,

ble, and habit were confined within the limits of an affluent but private fortune. Their domestic train was composed of slaves or freed-men; and Augustus or Trajan would have blushed at employing even the meanest of the Romans in the servile discharge of official duty. Yet superior as the emperors have hitherto appeared to the forms of grandeur and the suggestions of vanity, they could not withstand the impious adulations of the east. The successors of Alexander were the first who enjoyed the honours of deification. The Roman governors in Asia, as they succeeded them in their power and palaces, usurped also their altars and temples; and it was natural the emperors should not refuse what their pro-consuls had accepted. But the contagious disease of flattery soon spread from the provinces to the capital; and Julius Cæsar during his life time consented to assume a place among the tutelar deities of Rome. The mild disposition of his successor induced him to renounce the dangerous pre-eminence; nor was it ever afterwards aspired to but by the mad Caligula and the profane Domitian. A regular custom however was established on the decease of every emperor of ranking him among the gods by a decree of the senate, provided he had neither lived nor died like a tyrant. The tenets of the heathen religion readily allowed an institution which would
have

have been abhorred as a daring profanity by the more strict principles of pure christianity, and the virtues of the Antonines easily attained an honour which had been conferred on the vices of Hercules and Jupiter.

The first founder of imperial government had derived from a mean family in the little town of Aricia the appellation of Octavius. As the adopted son of his uncle he had assumed the surname of Cæsar; but the former was stained with the sanguinary proscriptions of the triumvir, and the latter too strongly revived the memory of the inordinate ambition of the dictator. After a very serious discussion in the senate, the title of Augustus was chosen for, and acknowledged by him; it was expressive of the character of peace and sanctity which he uniformly affected. But the personal title of Augustus expired not with the prince on whom it was bestowed, or the family name of Cæsar with the line to which it originally belonged. These appellations were soon inseparably connected with the imperial dignity, and preserved by a long succession of emperors; yet a distinction was introduced, and the sacred title of Augustus was reserved for the monarch, whilst the name of Cæsar was more freely communicated to his relations, and generally appropriated to the presumptive heir of the empire.

Augustus,

Augustus, cool and unfeeling, had early assumed the mask of hypocrisy, which he never afterwards laid aside. Equally without resentment or humanity, his virtues and even his vices were artificial. According to the various dictates of his interest he was the enemy or the father of the Roman world. The same motives which induced him voluntarily to proffer the resignation of his power, prompted him to profess a respect for a free constitution. The people were deceived by the idea of civil liberty; the armies by the image of civil government; and his fears persuaded him to conceal beneath the pretended garb of moderation the invidious dignity of imperial authority. The fate of Cæsar continually presented itself to his view; the fidelity of the legions might defend him from the open indignation of avowed conspiracy, but no vigilance could protect him against the secret dagger of assassination. The ostentatious display of power had provoked the destruction of his uncle. The consul or tribune might have exercised his authority in peace, but the title of king insulted the remnant of republican spirit; and Augustus, whilst he coveted the power, dreaded the fate and avoided the indiscreet arrogance of his kinsman. The illusive representation of freedom satisfied a feeble senate and enervated people; and the subsequent deaths of Caligula, Nero, and Domitian were prompted
not

not by a motive of liberty but a principle of self-preservation. The execution of Caligula by the manly resolution of Chærea seemed for a moment to revive the dying embers of freedom. The consuls convoked the senate in the capitol; they condemned the memory of the Cæsars, and gave the watch-word Liberty to the few cohorts who faintly embraced their cause. But the ferocious temper of the Prætorian guards soon extinguished the hasty spark of republicanism; and this dream of liberty served only to exercise the moderation of Claudius, who generously pardoned a conduct he was able to punish, but which he was prudent enough to despise.

A greater degree of danger was to be dreaded from the precarious affection and alarming influence of the armies. In the acquisition of his authority, Augustus had inured them to the violation of every social duty. He once already had nearly become the victim of their seditious rage, and he trembled at the continuance of that licentious violence which he had long encouraged them to practise. The rigour of discipline was carefully restored; and Roman prejudice, by interposing the majesty of the senate, contributed to establish his authority and secure their allegiance. By these artful measures, from the establishment of Augustus to the death of Commodus, the dangers
of

of military government were in some measure averted. During the short reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, the Roman world experienced and lamented the fury of contending armies: but with the exception of that interval, nearly two centuries passed away undisturbed by civil commotion; and the consequences of revolutions, in the destruction of Caligula and Domitian, were confined to the walls of Rome. But though the Roman emperors had yet suffered but little from the caprice of the legions, the knowledge of their dispositions induced them to invest their successors with a considerable share of present authority. Augustus reposed his last hopes on Tiberius; he adopted him as his son, and procured for him the censorial and tribunitian power. Vespasian associated in the empire, a prince whose amiable character turned the public attention from the origin to the glory of the Flavian House; the virtues of Titus justified the confidence of the emperor, and secured during his short reign the transient felicity of the Roman world.

A. D. 96. The advanced and feeble age of Nerva promoted the election of Trajan; and the weakness of the emperor was counterbalanced by the vigour of his successor. The equitable administration and martial achievements of Trajan, at this distant period, excite our reverence and

and admiration; but no inconsiderable share of praise is due to the patriotism of Nerva, who in calling a stranger to the succession, preferred the interests of the empire to the pretensions of consanguinity. The arts of the empress Plotina, either fixed the irresolution of her husband, or contrived a fictitious adoption; and Hadrian

A.D. 117. possessed himself of that power which the penetration of Trajan must at least have reluctantly bequeathed him. He reformed the laws, supported military discipline, and visited every province in person. But though the empire flourished in peace and prosperity during his reign, yet in the early days of it he put to death four consular senators, his personal enemies; and during the latter period of his authority, a tedious and painful illness rendered him a peevish and cruel tyrant. The beauty of Ælius Verus had allured his inclinations; but the premature death of this voluptuous nobleman soon after he was advanced to the rank of Cæsar, preserved the dignity of the empire, and secured its happiness in the appointment of the Antonines. The son of Verus was adopted by the gratitude of Pius, and on the accession of Marcus invested with an equal share of the imperial power; but his reverence for the political capacity of his colleague confined him to the indulgence of private vices, and a perseverance

servance in excess, terminated the dissolute career of a short life, which though not likely to conduce to, had never been permitted to interrupt the happiness of the Roman world. The criminal regard of Hadrian for Ælius Verus was compensated for in the subsequent selection of the Antonines. Antoninus Pius was near fifty, and Marcus about seventeen when first elevated by the discernment of the Emperor above the condition of private life; and though Pius had two sons, he gave his daughter Faustina in marriage to Marcus, obtained for him from the senate the tribunitian and proconsular powers, and associated him to all the labours and honours of empire. Marcus revered the character of his benefactor; he loved him as a parent, he obeyed him as a sovereign;

A. D. and the forty-two years which com-
138, 180. prized the extent of their united reigns, is perhaps the only period in which the welfare of the people was the sole object of government. The love of religion, justice, and peace characterised Titus Pius; in private life he was amiable and unaffected, and the cheerful serenity of his temper evinced the benevolence of his soul. The virtues of Marcus Aurelius were of a severer kind; formed in the rigid school of the Stoics, he assumed a steady control over his passions, and considered virtue as the only good, vice as the
only

only evil. Amidst the tumult of a camp, his mind was exercised in meditation, and he even condescended to impart the philosophy he cultivated; but his life was the noblest comment on the precepts of Zeno; severe and inflexible towards himself he was mild to the failings of others, and lamented that Avidius Cassius, the author and leader of a rebellion, had by a voluntary death withdrawn himself from his mercy. Though he regretted the calamities, and detested the ferocious features of war, he readily exposed himself to the dangers of it; nor was he deterred by the severity of the climate from enduring, on the frozen banks of the Danube, the hardships of eight winter campaigns. But the weakness of his constitution was inferior to the strength of his mind, and his body sunk at length beneath the accumulated pressure of incessant fatigue; yet his memory was revered by a grateful people, and his image, long after his death, was frequently preserved among those of the household gods. The æra from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus, may be pronounced the most happy for the human race that history describes; the absolute power which swayed the Roman empire was tempered by wisdom and virtue; four successive emperors administered justice with impartiality, and restrained the armies with a firm but gentle hand. The forms of the civil admini-

nistration were carefully adhered to, the image of Liberty was preserved, and these unlimited sovereigns were content to consider themselves the accountable ministers of the state. But though the labours of these monarchs were repaid by the success attendant on them, and by the delight of beholding the general happiness, yet a melancholy reflection must have embittered the noblest of human enjoyments. The instability of life continually obtruded itself on their minds, and the dread lest a licentious youth, or jealous tyrant, should abuse the authority they had exercised for the general benefit. The annals of former reigns justified these apprehensions. The crafty and cruel Tiberius, the furious insane Caligula, the stupid Claudius, the unnatural and sanguinary Nero, with the beastly gluttony of Vitellius, and the inhuman cowardice of Domitian, had in turns oppressed and depopulated the empire from the death of Augustus; and the small respite it obtained was only in the doubtful interval of Vespasian, and the short reign of Titus: four score years of unremitting tyranny had proved fatal to almost every virtue or talent which had arisen during that unhappy period. The sense of slavery was rendered also less supportable to the persecuted Romans by the recollection of former liberty, and the possession of present dominion. The first embittered the hour
of

of reflection by degrading comparison; the obscure slave of a Persian monarch, if elevated to future rank and wealth, might still consider himself as dependent on the nod of a prince; his name, his riches, and his honours were all the gift of a master, who might resume without injustice what perhaps he had bestowed without reason. Bred up in the domain of despotism, his ideas scarce extended to a state of freedom, and his language and habits accustomed him to prompt servility and implicit obedience. But it was impossible for the Romans to forget that they once were free; and a century had scarce elapsed since the approbation of the people was the sole source of dignity, and the sure and ready road to promotion; they could not but revere a virtuous and victorious common-wealth, and abhor the successful crimes of Cæsar and Augustus. Grecian philosophy had endowed their minds with just and liberal notions of human nature, and the origin of government; and they must inwardly have despised the tyrants whom they outwardly were compelled to flatter.

But whilst the memory of ancient liberty haunted their imaginations, and tortured their minds, the proud domain of the Roman empire precluded their persons from escape. On every side the devoted slave of Imperial despotism was

encompassed by a vast extent of sea and land ; inhospitable deserts and barbarian tribes, with an expanse of ocean, were alone to be discerned beyond the frontiers. The fierce manners and unknown languages of uncivilized nations alarmed his fears and excited his disgust ; nor was he without dread that a dependent state or avaricious king would purchase the emperor's protection, or court his bounty by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive. Yet dreary as this prospect appeared even to attain this land of precarious security, and escape the vigilance of multiplied and subservient guards, was a measure fraught with difficulty and danger. In the reign of Tiberius, a Roman knight who had endeavoured to fly to the Parthians was stopped in the Straights of Sicily ; and Cicero, in a letter to Marcellus in exile, reminds him, " Wherever
" you are, remember you are equally in the power
" of the conqueror." The Roman empire, during the iron sway of a tyrant, might be considered as a vast and hopeless prison.

CHAPTER III.

**THE CRUELTY, FOLLIES, AND MURDER OF COMMODUS—
ELECTION OF PERTINAX—HIS ATTEMPTS TO REFORM
THE STATE—HIS ASSASSINATION BY THE PRÆTO-
RIAN GUARDS—PUBLIC SALE OF THE EMPIRE TO
DIDIUS JULIANUS—CLODIUS ALBINUS IN BRI-
TAIN, PESCENNIUS NIGER IN SYRIA, AND SEP-
TIMIUS SEVERUS IN PANNONIA, DECLARE
AGAINST THE MURDERERS OF PERTI-
NAX—CIVIL WARS AND VICTORIES OF
SEVERUS OVER HIS THREE RIVALS,**

THE indulgence of Marcus Antoninus to his relations and connections, exceeded the bounds of private virtue, and became a public injury. His wife Faustina was as much celebrated for her gallantries as her beauty; and the emperor himself was the only man in the empire who seemed ignorant or insensible of her irregularities. In the course of thirty years he promoted several of her lovers to posts of honour and profit; and in his meditations he thanked the gods for having bestowed upon him a wife so faithful, so gentle, and so virtuous! The obsequious senate, at his request, de-

clared her a deity, and altars were erected, and temples rose to the polluted memory of his sensual consort. She was represented with the attributes of Juno, Ceres, and Venus; and the youth of either sex, on the day of their nuptials, were commanded to adore their *chaste* patroness.

But the vices of Commodus, as they were attended with more fatal consequences to the empire, cast a shade on the reputation, and reprove the fond partiality of the father who preferred the aggrandizement of a worthless son to the happiness of millions. Yet it must be acknowledged that nothing was neglected by the anxious parent; and men of virtue and learning were summoned from every part to correct the disposition and expand the mind of the young Commodus. But instruction was not likely to produce fruits in a soil so ill calculated for it, and the efforts of his masters were in vain exerted to render the profligate offspring of Marcus worthy of the throne he was designed for; the whisper of a licentious favorite soon effaced the lesson of the philosopher; and the precipitance of Titus himself, in admitting his son to a full participation of imperial power, blasted the hopes of a laboured education. Though he survived the indiscretion but four years, yet his life was sufficiently long to lament the authority he had conferred on the impetuous youth.

The

The unprovoked cruelties of Commodus are not to be accounted for by the common motives which inflame the mind, and silence the voice of pity. When he ascended the throne, he beheld
A. D. 180. around him neither competitor to remove nor enemies to punish; the beloved son of Marcus succeeded amidst the acclamations of the senate and armies. The deaths of Nero and Domitian might have warned him of the inevitable fate of tyranny, whilst the secure reigns of his five predecessors provided for his safety in the imitation of their mild administrations. Yet nature had formed Commodus rather of a weak than wicked disposition; the slave of his attendants, his mind was gradually corrupted, and that ferocious barbarity which at first was an acquiescence to the suggestions of others, at length degenerated into a habit, and became the ruling passion of his soul.

The death of his father left the new emperor embarrassed with the command of a great army, and the conduct of a war against the Quadi and Marcomanni; the effeminate youths whom Antoninus had banished were immediately restored to favour, and readily persuaded him to renounce the dangers of a campaign, and exchange the wild countries beyond the Danube for the pleasures and splendid palaces of Rome. Yet the awe of his

father's former counsellors retained him during the summer with the camp; and it was not till autumn, after granting an honourable peace to the Barbarians, that he entered the capital in unmerited triumph. His graceful person and popular address attracted the public favour, and his impatience to renew in Rome his dissolute course of amusements, was ascribed to a fond regard for his country. The three first years of his reign were administered by the old and faithful servants of his father, and these preserved the tranquillity of the empire, whilst the emperor and his favorites, undisturbed by public business, revelled in private debauchery and sensual luxury; but a fatal incident soon perverted or confirmed his hitherto

A. D. 183.

fluctuating disposition. As he was returning from the amphitheatre to the palace, in a dark and narrow portico an assassin waited his passage, and rushed upon him with a drawn sword, exclaiming, "*The senate sends you this.*" The menace disappointed the attempt; the author of it was seized by the guards, and revealed the conspiracy. Lucilla, the widow of Lucius Verus, and the emperor's sister, jealous of the reigning empress, had armed the murderer against the life of her brother. The loyalty of Claudius Pompeianus, her second husband, precluded her from entrusting him with her dark design; but she easily found associates in a number of lovers who

who ministered to her pleasures, and partook her looser hours. These associates were abandoned to the rigour of justice, and the life of the princess, after a melancholy interval of exile, was terminated by a violent death.

Though this conspiracy had been formed within the walls of the palace, yet the words of the assassin sunk deep in the mind of Commodus, and impressed him with fear and hatred towards the senate. He was formerly disgusted with them as ministers, he now dreaded them as enemies. The informers, a race of men almost extinguished by the equity of former reigns, were revived and increased by imperial protection and encouragement. Wealth was criminal in the sight of avarice, and virtue was an implied censure on vice; suspicion was considered equivalent to proof, and condemnation was substituted for trial. The friends of the condemned were involved in his fate, lest they might lament or avenge it; and Commodus having once tasted, became insatiate in his thirst for blood. Maximus and Condius, two brothers of the Quintilian family, were celebrated for fraternal affection; their pleasures and occupations were invariably the same; and the Antonines, who valued their virtues and admired their union, in the same year elevated them to the consulship. But their amiable qualities and simplicity

city of manners were offensive to the tyrant, and it may be considered as a degree of mercy that he united them in death. Even his own instrument of cruelty could not escape the extent of his sanguinary rage. Perennis, a servile and ambitious minister, had accumulated an immense treasure by acts of rapine and extortion; with the command of the Prætorian guards, and his son at the head of the Illyrian legions, he might possibly have aspired to empire; but his fate was decided by a circumstance which proves how much military discipline was relaxed. The legions of Britain, discontented with the administration of Perennis, deputed a select body of fifteen hundred men to represent their complaints. These military petitioners soon accomplished the object of their journey, and the emperor with unfeeling indifference resigned his

A. D. 186.

minister to their vengeance; but the presumption of the army betrayed the weakness of the government, and announced the near approach of impending licentiousness. A spirit of desertion had already begun to prevail among the troops, who infested openly and with impunity the highways. Maternus, a private soldier, collected these bands of robbers into one body, and augmenting it with the contents of the prisons and the devoted victims of slavery, plundered the defenceless cities of Gaul and Spain.

Defeated

Defeated, and at last encompassed, his resource was in a daring effort of despair. He ordered his followers to disperse, to pass the Alps in small parties, and repair to Rome in various disguises during the feast of Cybele. The murder of the emperor, and the possession of the throne were the objects of his enterprize ; but the envy of an accomplice discovered and ruined the plan at the moment his troops had actually filled the streets of Rome.

The death of Perennis made room for the exaltation of Cleander. By birth a Phrygian and a slave, by rendering himself useful to the vices of the emperor, he rapidly ascended to the highest station a subject could attain. Avarice was the reigning passion of his soul, and during his administration every dignity of the empire was publicly exposed to sale. The execution of the laws was equally venal and arbitrary, and a wealthy criminal might procure the reversal of his sentence and inflict whatever punishment he pleased on his accuser. Such were the means by which Cleander was enabled, in the emperor's name, to erect baths, porticos, and places of public exercise for the use of the people. But amidst the glare of this apparent liberality, the Romans forgot not the death of Byrrhus, a senator, to whose merit the late emperor had granted one of his daughters ; nor
would

would they forgive the destruction of Arrius Antoninus, who as he claimed the name, maintained the virtuous manners of the Antonines. The crime of the first was revealing to the emperor the true character of Cleander; and the last, when proconsul in Asia; had pronounced sentence against a worthless favourite of the minister. The indignation excited by the fate of Byrrhus and Arrius was inflamed into open rage by the calamities of pestilence and famine. Though the former could only be imputed to the gods, the latter was ascribed to an invidious monopoly, and the discontented clamours of the populace demanded the head of the minister. Cleander sallied forth at the head of the Prætorian cavalry, but the infantry, long jealous of the superior prerogatives of that corps, sustained the cause of the people. A civil war was maintained at the very gates of the palace, and the emperor, immersed in luxury, was aroused from his security by his eldest sister Fadilla, and Marcia, the most favoured of his concubines. They threw themselves at his feet and represented the crimes of his minister and the rage of the people. Commodus started from his dream of pleasure; he commanded the head of Cleander to be thrown from
A. D. 189. a window, and the desired spectacle instantly appeased the tumult.

But

But the disposition of the son of Marcus allowed him not to regain the affections and confidence of his subjects; every symptom of virtue was extinct in his mind. The inner recesses of his palace were devoted to lusts, to describe which would pollute the pen of the historian, and his appearance in public attested his attachment to the most base and brutal amusements. The sports of the circus and amphitheatre, the combats of gladiators, and the hunting of wild beasts gratified his savage disposition, and even exercised his skill. Though his masters in learning and philosophy had been heard with disgust or neglect, yet those appointed to teach him the use of the javelin and the bow found in him a ready disciple, whose steady eye and dexterous hand they might with reason applaud. The exploits of the Grecian Hercules in the destruction of the Nemæan lion, and the boar of Erymanthus, were the objects of his admiration. He assumed the name of the Roman Hercules; the lion's hide and the club were placed among the ensigns of sovereignty; and he at last exhibited before the Roman people those exercises which at first he had confined to the eyes of a few favourites. With arrows whose points were shaped in form of a crescent, in its rapid career he divided the long neck of the ostrich. A panther sprung on a trembling malefactor,

factor, the instant the shaft flew the beast dropt dead, and the man remained unhurt. An hundred lions who roamed at once the ample space of the Arena fell by an hundred darts from the hand of Commodus; even the bulk of the elephant, and scaly hide of the rhinoceros could not preserve them from his mortal stroke; and whether he aimed at the head or heart of the animal, the wound was alike certain and fatal. But the meanest of the populace beheld with shame and indignation their sovereign enter the lists as a gladiator, a profession which the laws of Rome had justly branded with infamy. In this character the emperor fought seven hundred and thirty-five times; and that he might more carefully record his degrading occupation, he received from the common fund of the gladiators, a stipend so enormous as to become a fresh tax on the Roman people. But though his victories in the amphitheatre were not often sanguinary, yet in his own palace he frequently condescended to honour with a mortal wound his wretched antagonists; and to brand himself with further disgrace, in the place of the rejected title of Hercules, he assumed the name of Paulus, a celebrated gladiator, and ordered it to be inscribed on his statues, and to be repeated by the indignant and applauding senate. Claudius Pompeianus, the husband of Lucilla,

cilla, alone sustained the rank of his station; and though his affection as a parent induced him to permit to his sons an attendance on the amphitheatre, declared his own resolution never to behold the emperor prostituting his person and dignity. He escaped the resentment of the son of Marcus, and preserved his honour and life. But the moment was fast approaching when the ferocious spirit of Commodus was to prove fatal to himself. He had shed with impunity the noblest blood of Rome, but perished as soon as he was dreaded by his own domestics. Marcia, his favourite concubine; Eclectus, his chamberlain, and Lætus, his prætorian præfect, alarmed at the fate of their predecessors and companions, resolved to prevent the consequences of his wild caprice. After a reign of thirteen years, Marcia presented him a draught of poisoned wine, A. D. 192. when he had fatigued himself by 31st December, hunting some wild beasts; and a robust youth, by profession a wrestler, strangled him whilst oppressed by the effect of the baneful potion. The measures of the conspirators were conducted with coolness and deliberation, and they fixed on Pertinax to succeed, as an emperor whose character would justify the action. He was then præfect of the city, and though of obscure origin yet his conspicuous merit had advanced him to the consular

fular dignity, and most of the provinces successively had experienced the blessings of his government. The last of the friends and ministers of Marcus, he hourly awaited and expected his destruction from the son; and when informed that the chamberlain and præfect were at his door, prepared to meet his fate with calm resignation. Instead of death, they offered him the empire of the Roman world; and he accepted the purple with sincere reluctance, from a knowledge of the duties and dangers which encompassed the throne.

Whilst the protracted reign of Commodus disgusts us with a long repetition of his vices, we are but allowed to contemplate the virtues of Pertinax, and to lament their loss. Even in the moment of his elevation, the angry countenances of the Prætorian guards betrayed the state of their minds, and they received the intelligence that Commodus had suddenly died of an apoplexy, and that Pertinax already swayed the imperial sceptre with doubt and discontent. The senate, who expected to have beheld with the dawn of day the late tyrant assume the honours of the consulship in the habit of a gladiator, resigned themselves to all the transports of joy at the fate

A. D. 193. of Commodus and the succession of
January 31st. the virtuous Pertinax. The memory
of

of the son of Marcus was branded with eternal infamy ; his honours reversed, his statues thrown down, and his titles erased from the public monuments ; but the burial rites were granted by his indulgent successor, to the remembrance of the virtues of the Antonines, and the entreaties of his brother-in-law Claudius Pompeianus. On the day of his accession, the disinterested emperor resigned over to his wife and son the whole of his private fortune ; but he refused to the vanity of the first the title of Augusta, and to the inexperienced youth of the last, the rank of Cæsar. In public behaviour Pertinax was grave and affable ; his moderate establishment and frugal entertainments reproached the luxurious prodigality of his predecessor, and his occupation was to heal the wounds that had been inflicted by a long tyranny. The unfortunate exiles were recalled from banishment, the prisons were delivered of their victims, and the bodies of murdered senators deposited in the sepulchres of their ancestors. The informers who had been encouraged in the former reign experienced punishment in this ; but the steady temper of Pertinax, even on this occasion, maintained its accustomed moderation, and granted alone to justice what was demanded by resentment or prejudice.

The extravagance of Commodus had exhausted
VOL. I. F the

the coffers of the empire, and the finances of the state demanded the most vigilant care; no more than eight thousand pounds were found in the treasury on the accession of Pertinax, yet with a generous firmness he remitted the oppressive taxes invented by his predecessor, and declared "that he was better satisfied to administer a poor republic with innocence, than to acquire riches by the ways of tyranny and dishonour." To supply the promised donation to the Prætorian guards, the instruments of luxury were exposed to sale, and the worthless favourites of the tyrant compelled to disgorge part of their ill-gotten wealth. But the licentious soldiery of the capital regretted the profuse prodigality of Commodus, and dreaded the restoration of ancient discipline. Their discontents were inflamed by Lætus, their præfect, who found that his emperor would reward a servant, but would not be ruled by a favorite. A noble senator was seized the third day of his reign, and violently carried to the camp to be invested with the imperial purple; the affrighted victim escaped to the feet of the sovereign. The rash youth of Sotius Falco, one of the consuls, aspired also to dominion, but the attempt was crushed by the unexpected presence of Pertinax; and his clemency would not suffer his short reign to be stained with the blood even of a guilty senator.

On

On the twenty-eighth of March, only eighty-six days from the death of Commodus, a general sedition broke out in the camp. Two or three hundred of the most desperate soldiers marched at noon towards the imperial palace; their companions threw open the gates on their appearance, and Pertinax, informed of their approach, advanced to meet the assassins. He painted his own innocence, and recalled the sanctity of their recent oath. For a few moments, the majestic firmness of his demeanor over-awed their intentions; but the fury of a barbarian of Tongres levelled the first blow against the emperor, and a multitude of wounds terminated his life and the hopes of a golden reign, in the very sight of an indignant people, who could only lament the fate they were unable to avert.

Though the proportion of the military force to the number of people was but small and inconsiderable, yet a body of ten or fifteen thousand guards are sufficient to control the inclinations of the most numerous populace. The Prætorian bands amounted nearly to the last-mentioned number. Augustus, sensible that the laws might colour, but that arms must maintain his usurpation, first instituted them; they were favoured with double pay and double privileges; at first, only three cohorts were stationed in the capital, and the

rest dispersed through the adjacent towns of Italy ; but the crafty Tiberius collected them in a permanent camp, which was fortified with care, and formed close to the walls of the city, on the summit of the Quirinal and Biminal Hills. The Prætorian guards, thus placed in view of the palace and the senate, soon perceived their own strength, and the weakness of the civil government. Nourished in the luxurious idleness of an opulent city, they considered the person of the sovereign, the authority of the senate, and the seat of empire entrusted to their fidelity and dependent on their will. The best and firmest princes had been compelled to flatter their pride, indulge their pleasures, and connive at their irregularities ; and from the elevation of the emperor Claudius, they had, on the accession of every new emperor, exacted the purchase of their acquiescence under the specious name of a donative. Their claims they not only supported by arms, but endeavoured to justify by arguments ; they considered themselves as the genuine representatives of the Roman people, and according to the ancient principles of the constitution, best entitled to elect the military chief of the republic ; and whatever might be deficient in reasoning, was supplied by the weight of their swords.

By the murder of Pertinax, the Prætorians had
violated

violated the sanctity of the throne, and they degraded the majesty of it by their subsequent conduct. On the public ramparts they exposed to sale the imperial dignity, and proclaimed that the Roman world was to be disposed of by auction to the best bidder. The two competitors for it, were Servius Sulpicianus, the late emperor's father-in-law, whose ambition prompted him to aspire to a throne, recently polluted by the blood of so near a relation; and Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator, whose wife and daughter persuaded him that he was worthy of empire. Sulpicianus had already promised a donative of one hundred and sixty pounds sterling to each soldier, when Didius rose at once to the sum of two hundred; the offer was accepted, the gates of the camp were thrown open to the purchaser; he was declared emperor, but it was stipulated A. D. 193. that he should pardon and forget the March 28. competition of Sulpicianus.

The soldiers, to fulfil the contract, placed the sovereign in their centre, and conducted him through the streets of the astonished and indignant city. The senate was commanded to assemble, and the friends of Pertinax, and the personal enemies of Didius, found it prudent to conceal their secret dislike in apparent satisfaction. The new emperor enlarged on his own virtues, and the freedom

of his election, and the obsequious senate readily engaged their allegiance to a prince supported and surrounded by armed protectors. By the same military attendants, Julian was conducted to the palace. He surveyed with indifference the abandoned body of Pertinax, and derided the frugal repast provided for his supper. A magnificent feast was prepared by his order, and till a late hour he amused himself with the performances of some celebrated dancers. Yet when the crowd of flatterers were withdrawn, and he was left to darkness and solitude, he is represented as passing a sleepless night, revolving possibly the fate of his predecessor, and the probable consequences of his own rashness. His inquietude was justified by his situation. The soldiers themselves were ashamed of the prince they had exalted, the citizens regarded him with abhorrence, the nobles met him with hollow professions of duty, but the populace, secure in their numbers, followed him with reproachful clamours and menacing imprecations; and conscious of their own impotence, called upon the legions of the frontiers to assert the violated majesty of Rome.

The public discontent had already spread from the centre to the more remote parts of the empire. The armies of Britain, of Syria, and of Illyricum lamented the death of Pertinax, and refused

fused to ratify the ignominious bargain of the Prætorian bands. The respective strength of these armies was exactly balanced; and their different commanders men of experience and capacity.

The noble extraction of Clodius Albinus surpassed both his competitors; but the branch from whence he claimed was sunk, and transplanted into a remote province. He is accused of concealing every vice which degrades human nature, under the cloak of philosophy; but we must recollect his accusers were the venal writers of the reign of Severus. Albinus had been honoured with the confidence of Marcus, and though he continued to enjoy the favour of the son, it does not appear he was either the minister of his cruelties, or the associate of his pleasures. When Commodus distrusted the designs of some discontented generals, he authorized, by a letter, Albinus to assume the title and ensigns of Cæsar; but the prudent governor declined an honour which might have involved him in the impending destruction of his master. He courted power by nobler means. On a premature report of the death of the emperor, he assembled his troops, and declared his intention to reinstate the senate and people in their legal authority. Secure in his insular situation, and in the affections of a well-disciplined army, he braved the subsequent menaces of Commodus,

was reserved towards Pertinax, and instantly rejected the degrading treaty and insulting usurpation of Julian. He declined the pompous titles of Augustus and emperor, and styled himself the lieutenant of the senate and people.

Pescennius Niger, from an obscure birth and station, was raised to the government of Syria by personal merit, yet his parts were better suited for the second than the first rank; as a general and governor he had acquired the love of the soldiers; the esteem of the provincials and the wishes of Asia, on the intelligence of the murder of Pertinax, invited Niger to assume the imperial dignity; but whilst he flattered himself his accession would be undisturbed by competition, and unstained with blood, he neglected the means to secure victory, that he might enjoy the pomp of premature triumph. Instead of advancing rapidly to Italy and Rome, he wasted at Antioch those moments which were improved by the decisive activity of the diligent Severus.

Septimius Severus, a native of Africa, commanded at this time the Pannonian army; troops which from a perpetual warfare with the Germans and Sarmatians, were deservedly esteemed the best in the empire. A daring ambition, superior to the allurements of pleasure and the apprehensions of danger, animated their leader. On the first news
of

of the destruction of Pertinax, he harangued his legions, represented the weakness and insolence of the Prætorian guards, and promised to every soldier under his command, the sum of four hundred pounds as the reward of victory, and the recompense of empire. The acclamations of

A. D. 193. the army immediately saluted him

April 13. with the names of Augustus, Pertinax, and Emperor; and aware of his situation, which gave him an easy access into Italy, he advanced with a celerity proportioned to the greatness of the enterprize. Before his competitors could be apprised of his intentions, he might reasonably hope to revenge Pertinax, punish Julian, and receive the homage of the senate and people. During the whole expedition he scarce allowed a moment for refreshment, but marching on foot at the head of his columns, he revived the hopes, animated the spirits, and shared the hardships of the meanest foldier.

Augustus had declared "that a Pannonian army might in ten days appear in sight of Rome." The rapid approach of Severus convinced Julian of the propriety of the expression, and of his own inevitable destruction; each minute diminished the narrow span of life and empire, and his unavailing attempts to protract the ruin he was unable to prevent, exposed him to contempt and ridicule. The
venal

venal Prætorians were prevented by fear and shame from deserting his standard ; but enervated by luxury, they quitted the baths and theatres with regret, and trembled at the hopeless contest with the hardy legions of the north. Each motion of Julian betrayed his anxious perplexity ; he insisted that Severus should be declared a public enemy ; he intreated he might be associated to the honours of the empire ; he dispatched public ambassadors to negotiate with him, and private emissaries to assassinate him. But Severus, insensible to his offers, and guarded from his more dangerous practices by the assiduous fidelity of six hundred chosen men, advanced in a steady and rapid course. Without difficulty he passed the defiles of the Apennine, received into his party the troops sent to retard his progress, and made a short halt at Interamna, about seventy miles from Rome. The incredible expedition with which a numerous army was conducted eight hundred miles in the space of forty days, proves the goodness of the roads, the discipline of the legions, and the flourishing state of agriculture throughout the country. Though the victory of Severus was already secure, the despair of the Prætorian troops might have rendered it bloody ; but supported only by sullen obstinacy, they gladly embraced the proffered conditions to deliver up the perpetrators of the murder of Pertinax, and
abandon

abandon their worthless prince. The greatest part of the former were seized by their companions ; and the latter, by a sentence of the senate, A. D. 193. was beheaded in a private apartment of June 2d. the palace, after an anxious reign of sixty-six days.

The first moments of Severus were occupied in the honours and revenge due to the memory of Pertinax. His funeral was solemnized with melancholy magnificence, and his successor descended to pronounce his funeral oration with studied eloquence and well-acted sorrow ; but policy dictated the previous punishment of his assassins. The Prætorian guards were commanded to await in a large plain, without arms and in the habits of ceremony, the arrival of their sovereign ; a chosen part of the Illyrian army encompassed them with levelled spears ; conscious of guilt, and incapable of flight or resistance, they expected their fate in silent consternation. Severus, mounted on his tribunal, sternly reproached them with perfidy and cowardice, dismissed them with ignominy, despoiled them of their splendid ornaments, and banished them under pain of death to the distance of an hundred miles from the capital. Thus having celebrated the obsequies and appeased the manes of his predecessor, after a short stay of thirty days, Severus left Rome to encounter his more formidable rivals.

If

If his two competitors, united by their common danger, had advanced upon him without delay, Severus possibly would have sunk beneath the combined weight; but the character of the emperor, equally with history, enables us to trace the means by which he averted so formidable a junction. Severus regarded oaths and treaties only as they conduced to his interest; and the moment danger was past, his obedient conscience released him from the inconvenient obligation. He promised only to betray; he flattered only to ruin. While he advanced against Niger, he declined any hostile declarations, suppressed the name of his antagonist, and in private spoke of him as his old friend and intended successor. The sons of Niger had fallen into his hands, and as long as the power of the father inspired terror or even respect, they were educated with the most tender care; but the parent's ruin extended to his offspring, and after his defeat they were first condemned to exile, and were finally removed by a private death.

Two engagements, one near the Hellespont, the other in the narrow defiles of Cilicia, decided the fate of his Syrian competitor, and he now rushed forwards with his victorious army to overwhelm his remaining rival. During his contest he had treated Albinus with every mark of respect and esteem, he had conferred on him, as the price of his

his neutrality, the rank of Cæsar, and even in the letters in which he announced his victory, he styles him the brother of his soul and his empire; but the messengers charged with the letters were instructed to demand a private audience, and to plunge their daggers in his heart. The conspiracy was discovered, and the too credulous Albinus, no longer confiding in vain professions, and eager for revenge, passed over to the continent to meet and engage his approaching antagonist. Near Lyons one hundred and fifty thousand Romans were engaged. The valour of the British army maintained a doubtful contest with the discipline of the Illyrian legions; the fortune of Severus seemed for a moment to have forsaken his standard: but the event was decisive, and fatal to the hopes and life of Albinus, and the war was terminated by that memorable day.

In the civil wars of modern Europe, religion, freedom, or loyalty, have interested the troops in the decision of the quarrel; but the legions of Rome were allured to the combat by liberal donatives or more liberal promises, and a defeat, which disabled the chief from the performance of his engagements, dissolved the allegiance of his followers, and left them to consult their own safety by a timely desertion. The provinces exhausted, and the cities seldom fortified, hastened to implore the clemency of the conqueror.

Yet

Yet the city of Byzantium, in the contest between Severus and Niger, deserves an honourable exception. As one of the greatest passages from Europe into Asia, it was provided with a large fleet, and defended by a strong garrison. Severus, by forcing the passage of the Hellespont, disappointed this prudent scheme of defence, and left the siege of Byzantium to the arms of his generals. During three years, it defied the whole military and naval power of the empire, and at length surrendered to famine; yet the revenge of Severus in destroying the city, deprived the Roman people of the strongest bulwark against the barbarians of Pontus and Asia, and the Gothic fleets in the succeeding age passed into the centre of the Mediterranean, through the undefended Bosphorus.

The deaths of Niger and Albinus on the field of battle, by removing every dread of competition, left Severus at liberty to exercise the unforgiving spirit of his natural disposition; and the head of Albinus, with a menacing letter, informed the senate he was determined to spare none of his adherents. Forty-one senators were condemned and executed, and the provinces of Gaul and Spain were equally oppressed by exorbitant fines, and desolated by sanguinary proscriptions. The subsequent wisdom and justice of Severus's administration

stration prove the sincerity of his expression, "that
" to be mild it was first necessary to be cruel." He had secured the Roman empire, and he now bestowed an unremitting care in the improvement of his acquisition. Salutary laws were promoted, and maintained with inflexible justice; public edifices were erected, and a constant distribution of corn and provisions captivated the affections of the Roman people. But the mortal poison of civil war, amidst external prosperity, lurked in the vitals of the constitution, and the insolence of the legions betrayed the certain symptoms of a declining empire. The nerves of discipline had been relaxed by Severus, either from gratitude or policy; the pay of the soldiers was increased, their donatives were multiplied; they were indulged in the idleness of quarters, and their persons decorated with new and distinguishing ornaments. The Prætorian guards had been abolished for the murder of Pertinax, but the institution was restored by Severus, and augmented to four times the former number. These soldiers were now draughted from the frontiers, and whilst the youth of Italy were thus deterred from the exercise of arms, the stern aspects and barbarous manners of these strangers over-awed and terrified the timid and luxurious city. The command of these troops was devolved on the Prætorian præfect; and
Plau-

Plautianus, the favourite of Severus, was first entrusted with this authority. He possessed it ten years; but the marriage of his daughter with the emperor's eldest son, instead of establishing his fortune, determined his downfall. The apprehensions of Severus were excited by the ambition of Plautianus; he consented with reluctance to the death of a man whom he still loved, and Papinian, a celebrated lawyer, succeeded him in the office of Prætorian præfect.

The senate, till the reign of Severus, had possessed a nominal authority; but the haughty and inflexible spirit of that prince, accustomed to the implicit obedience of camps, despised the intermediate state between the emperor and the army. He assumed the conduct and style of a sovereign and conqueror, and exercised without disguise the whole legislative and executive power. The imperial authority was no longer considered as a delegated commission, but established by the resignation of the senate; and Roman jurisprudence, now united with monarchy, was supposed to have attained perfection in the writings of Papinian, Paulus, and Ulpian, the most eminent civil lawyers, and who flourished under the house of Severus.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEATH OF SEVERUS—TYRANNY OF CARACALLA—
USURPATION OF MACRINUS—FOLLIES OF
ELAGABALUS—VIRTUES AND DEATH
OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

THE means by which Severus ascended the steep acclivity of greatness, engaged his attention and exercised his activity; but his establishment on the summit was accompanied with little satisfaction. "He had been all things, and all was of little value," was the melancholy reflection of the lord of the Roman world. To perpetuate in his family the greatness he had acquired, was the remaining wish of ambition and paternal tenderness. Severus, like the rest of the Africans, was addicted to the studies of magic and divination; and perfectly versed in judicial astrology, acknowledged its dominion over his mind. After the loss of his first wife, he solicited and obtained the hand of

Julia Domma, a young lady of Emesa. A *royal nativity* was the inducement to Severus, but though indifferent himself to the attractions of beauty or wit, yet Julia possessed every charm and allure-ment which attend expressive features, an elegant person, and a lively imagination. Her prudence in the subsequent reign of her son, long averted his fate, and sometimes restrained his wild extravagancies; and during the life of her husband, she patronized the arts and encouraged with liberality the works of drooping genius. Letters and philosophy engaged her vacant hours and strengthened her understanding; and the learned have celebrated with grateful panegyric, the soundness of her judgment and the qualities of her mind: Yet history forbids us to rank amongst her virtues that of chastity; and the conduct of the empress Julia afforded an ample subject to the pen of scandal.

Two sons, Caracalla and Geta, were the issue of this marriage, and the future hopes of the emperor; but the fond expectations of the parent were disappointed by the early vices or imbecility of his unworthy offspring. Without talents or virtue, a rooted antipathy to each other seemed to be their predominant passion; and their aversion increasing with their years, divided into two factions the theatre, the circus, and the court. The anxious parent in vain endeavoured to allay
the

the growing animosity, and the unhappy discord of his family clouded the prospects and augmented the increasing infirmities of the declining emperor. The throne he had erected with so much labour, and cemented with so much blood, was soon likely to be overturned; and in the prophetic anguish of his soul, Severus foretold that the weaker of his sons would fall a sacrifice to the stronger, who, in his turn, would be ruined by his own vices. With an impartial hand, he had conferred on both the title of Augustus with the name of Antoninus; and the Roman world, for the first time, beheld three emperors. Yet Caracalla considered the equality an injury to the right of primogeniture; and Geta fought in the affections of the soldiers and people to balance the superior claim of his brother. A war in Britain enabled the aged emperor to withdraw his sons from the luxury of Rome, and to inure them to honourable toils. Notwithstanding his confidence in his lieutenants, the painful sensations of the gout, and the advanced period of threescore years, he was transported into that remote island, and in person endeavoured to complete the conquest of Britain. But though the Caledonians, unequal to resist his powerful attacks, sued for peace, yet their submission lasted no longer than their terror; and with the re-

A. D. 208.

treat of the legions, they re-assumed their independence. The fierce temper of the victor was enraged by their restless spirit; in penetrating to the northern extremity of the island, he had lost by the ambuscades of the enemy and the severity of the climate above fifty thousand men; and inflamed by continual revolt, he issued his orders, not to subdue, but to exterminate the natives.

The death of the unrelenting conqueror preserved the devoted Caledonians from the consequences of his resentment; but his last illness was increased by the exquisite pangs of filial degeneracy. The black passions of Caracalla impelled him to attempt the small remainder of his father's days, and he in vain endeavoured to estrange the fidelity of the legions. Severus had formerly condemned the criminal lenity of Marcus Antoninus, in sparing a worthless son. Distracted with the pains of mind and body, he revolved the sterner suggestions of justice: but though he frequently threatened, paternal tenderness continually interposed; and in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign, he expired at York, recommending with his last breath concord to his sons, and his sons to the army. Though the dying counsels of the emperor were little regarded by his heedless offspring, yet deaf to the solicitations of Caracalla, the obedient troops proclaimed
ed

ed both brothers emperors of Rome. The new princes left the Caledonians in peace, returned to the capital, celebrated the funeral obsequies of their father, and received the ready submission of the senate, the people, and the provinces. But their rapid journey through Gaul and Italy displayed the odious spectacle of fraternal discord. They never eat at the same table, or slept in the same house; and on their arrival at Rome they carefully divided the imperial palace. The doors and passages were diligently fortified, and no communication was allowed between their apartments; when they met it was in the presence of their afflicted mother, and even the practised dissimulation of a court could scarce conceal the inveterate hatred of their hearts.

The suggested division of the empire for a moment engaged their attention. It was proposed that Caracalla, the elder brother, should retain Europe and the western Africa; and that Asia and Egypt should be relinquished to Geta, who might fix his residence at Alexandria or Antioch: That numerous armies encamped on either side of the Thracian Bosphorus, should guard the frontiers of the rival monarchies; and that the senators of European extraction should remain at Rome, and the natives of Asia follow the emperor of the East. The tears of the empress Julia diverted a design

which had filled every breast with surprize and indignation. The Romans had to dread either the impending calamities of civil war, or in the permanent division of the provinces, the immediate dissolution of the empire.

Had the plan been carried into effect, the sovereign of the more warlike nations of Europe would soon have extended his dominion over the wealthy and effeminate realms of Asia. But Caracalla obtained an undivided empire by a more easy, though less honourable victory. By the persuasions of his mother he was induced, in her apartment, to meet his brother on terms of proposed reconciliation; but in the midst of their conversation, a party of concealed centurions rushed in, and assassinated the unfortunate Geta. The A. D. 212. distracted Julia, in her unavailing at-
Feb. 27th. tempts to save him, received a wound in her hand, and beheld with horror her eldest son animating and assisting the assassins. The moment Caracalla had perpetrated the fratricide, he hastened with well-dissembled confusion to the Prætorian camp; he threw himself on the ground before the statues of the tutelar deities, and to the soldiers who attempted to comfort him, described, in broken accents, his pretended danger and escape. The death of Geta, he insinuated, was the act of self-preservation; and though that
unfor-

unfortunate prince had been the favourite of the soldiers, Caracalla soon convinced them of the justice of the cause, by distributing the treasures accumulated by his father's frugality in one lavish donative. The subservient senate readily acquiesced in the decision of the military, and Geta was allowed by his brother the funeral of a Roman emperor.

But amidst the pursuits of pleasure and business, the stings of a guilty conscience tortured the mind of Caracalla, and the shades of an indignant father and murdered brother obtruded themselves upon his distracted imagination; his repentance prompted him, instead of atoning for the crime, to remove whatever might remind him of the deed. He condemned to death Fadilla, the last remaining daughter of the Emperor Marcus, for lamenting the untimely end of Geta; and the afflicted Julia, his mother, was compelled by a menace of the same fate, to disguise her affliction in smiles, and receive the assassin with the appearance of approbation. About twenty thousand persons, it was computed, perished under the vague appellation of Geta's friends. Helvius Pertinax, son to the prince of that name, was the victim of an unseasonable jest; and the ancestors of Thrasea Priscus, a family ever inimical to tyranny, determined his fate. When suspicion was exhausted,

virtue became a crime, and a life of innocence, or benevolence, was considered as a reproach by a vicious and bloody tyrant. Amidst the general execution of so many citizens, the particular fate of Papinian is not to be passed without distinction. The salutary counsellor of the aged Severus, he had continued to exhort and admonish the impetuous son; he was commanded to exert his eloquence in an apology for the murder of Geta. "That it was easier to commit than to justify a parricide" was the glorious reply of Papinian, who hesitated not a moment between the loss of life or honour. Such determined virtue will confer more lustre on his memory than either his numerous writings, or his acknowledged reputation as a lawyer.

A. D. 213. In a year after the death of Geta, Caracalla left the capital, and never more returned to it. The several provinces of the empire, particularly those of the east, during the remaining four years of his reign, were the scenes of his rapine and cruelty. At Alexandria, in Egypt, for a slight offence, he commanded a general massacre, and from the temple of Serapis, beheld unconcerned, the promiscuous slaughter of many thousand citizens, as well as strangers. But he courted the affections of the army, whilst he considered the rest of his subjects of little moment;

ment; and though his general demeanor was full of pride, he cultivated the insolent familiarity, and affected to imitate the dress and manners of the common soldiers. A secret conspiracy, provoked by his own jealousy, was at length fatal to the tyrant. Opilius Macrinus occupied the civil, and Adventus the military department of the Prætorian præfecture, which had been lately divided. Macrinus had raised himself by his dexterity in business, with a fair character, to this high office; but the caprice of the emperor was hourly to be dreaded, and the malice or fanaticism of an African, had suggested the dangerous prediction that Macrinus and his son were destined to empire. The man was sent in chains to Rome, and still asserted the truth of his prophecy. The magistrate communicated the examination to the imperial court then in Syria; but a friend of Macrinus found means to apprise him of the danger. The emperor, engaged in a chariot race, delivered the letters unopened to the Prætorian præfect, who read his fate, and resolved to prevent it. He inflamed the discontents of some inferior officers, and engaged the hand of Martialis, a soldier, disgusted at being refused the rank of centurion. On a pilgrimage of Caracalla, from Edeffa to Carrhæ, he stopped for some necessary occasion. His guards preserved a respectful distance, but
Martialis,

Martialis, under pretence of duty, approached the tyrant, and stabbed him to the heart; and the A. D. 217, bold assassin instantly fell by the arrow of March 8th. a Scythian archer. Such was the end of a monster, whose vices, in the minds of his soldiers, were obliterated by his partial liberality; and their gratitude compelled the senate to assign him a place among the gods. Alexander the Great was the object of Caracalla's admiration living; he assumed his ensigns, formed a Macedonian phalanx, and persecuted the disciples of Aristotle: but in no other action of his life did the son of Severus bear the faintest resemblance to the Macedonian hero, except in the murder of a great number of his own and of his father's friends.

After the death of Caracalla, the Roman world remained three days without a master. The Prætorian guards considered the power of bestowing it as almost a legal claim. The prudence of Adventus, the senior præfect, rejected the dangerous pre-eminence, and they were induced reluctantly to

A. D. 217. grant it to the crafty Macrinus, whom March 11th. they neither loved nor esteemed. A short time after his accession, he conferred on his son Diadumenianus, only ten years old, the imperial title, and the name of Antoninus; and hoped by the beautiful figure of the youth, and an additional donative, to secure the favour of the army and establish his doubtful throne,

The

The senate and provinces readily ratified the choice of the army; but when the transports of joy and surprize at their unexpected deliverance from a bloody tyrant were subsided, the members of the first began to scrutinize the merits of Macrinus with critical severity. Hitherto the sovereign power had always been delegated to a senator, but the Prætorian præfecture was still in possession of the Equestrian order. Macrinus was not a senator, and the choice of his ministers, in many instances, encreased the odium which arose from his obscure extraction. Trained to the forms of civil business, he trembled at the fierce manners of the soldiery; his personal courage was doubted, his military talents despised, and a whisper circulated through the camp the fatal secret of the conspiracy, and the murder of the late emperor: it was scarce necessary to add to these materials for commotion, the invidious office of reform; yet the prodigality of Caracalla compelled Macrinus to this dangerous but necessary measure. In executing it he observed a cautious prudence; to the soldiers already engaged he left the privileges and pay given by Caracalla, but the new recruits were received on the moderate establishment of Severus. One fatal error destroyed the effect of this judicious plan; instead of dispersing the numerous army assembled by the late emperor to
different

different quarters, he suffered them to remain united in Syria, to communicate their complaints, and to contemplate their own strength.

Julia Mæsa, the sister of the deceased widow of Severus, was ordered by the usurper to leave the court and Antioch; with an immense fortune she retired to Emesa, accompanied by her two daughters Soæmias and Mamæa, each of whom was a widow, and each of whom had a son. Bassianus, the son of Soæmias, was consecrated to the ministry of high priest of the Sun, and this vocation contributed to raise the Syrian youth to the command of the Roman world. A body of troops stationed at Emesa was compelled by the severity of Macrinus to pass the winter in camp; the soldiers frequently resorted to the temple of the Sun, and in the appearance of the young Pontiff, thought they recognized the features of Caracalla. The artful Mæsa readily sacrificed the reputation of her daughter to her ambition, and insinuated that Bassianus was the natural son of the late emperor; her profusion improved the resemblance, A. D. 218. and the troops declared Bassianus emperor, May 16. with the name of Antoninus, and called upon him to revenge their injuries, and the death of his supposed father. Macrinus, by a decisive motion, might have crushed his infant enemy; but doubtful how to act, he remained

at

at Antioch, whilst successive detachments joined the party of the conspirators. At length he marched out to meet his young competitor; in a battle fought near a village called Immæ, about twenty-two miles from Antioch, the Præ- A. D. 218.
torian troops, by an involuntary im- June 7th.
pulse, asserted their wonted superiority; the rebel ranks were broken, when the mother and grandmother of the Syrian prince threw themselves from their chariots, and revived by their example the drooping courage of the soldiers. Antoninus himself, though the rest of his life was devoted to effeminacy, acted on this occasion like a hero, and charged on horseback amidst his enemies; whilst the eunuch Gannys displayed the talents of an able general. Yet Macrinus might have obtained the victory, had he not abandoned his fortune by a shameful flight. His cowardice served only to postpone a few days a fate, in which his son Diadumenianus was involved; and the Prætorians, convinced their leader had deserted them, surrendered to the conquerors, and united with their antagonists under the banners of the supposed son of Caracalla. The specious letters in which the conqueror announced his victory, and professed his imitation of the examples of Augustus and Marcus, were received with respect by a weak and feeble senate; but that assembly,

though

though it might endeavour to conceal, could not wholly repress its disgust at his assuming, without a decree, the tribunitian and proconsular powers : this contemptuous negligence probably resulted from the ignorance of his Syrian attendants, or the fierce arrogance of his soldiers. The emperor, in trifling amusements and luxurious dissipation, passed his winter at Nicomedia ; and on the ensuing summer, displayed the pomp of his triumphal entry into the capital : his picture had al-

ready been transmitted to Rome, to be
 A. D. 219. placed over the altar of victory. He was drawn in sacerdotal robes of silk and gold, his head covered with a tiara, and his neck and arms encircled with collars and bracelets of immense value ; his eye-brows were tinged with artificial black, and his cheeks with red and white. The Romans, whilst they regarded the contemptible effeminacy of the east, almost regretted the ferocious cruelty of former tyrants. But the appearance of their sovereign in person soon engaged their attention. The sun at Emesa was worshiped under the name of Elagabalus, and under a conical black stone believed to have fallen from heaven on that sacred place ; Antoninus, who ascribed his elevation to this deity, wished to exalt him above all other gods, and the appellation of Elagabalus (for he adopted that name) attended his intemperate

rate zeal. The black stone in a chariot drawn by six milch white horses, passed through the streets strewed with gold dust; the pious emperor held the reins, and moved slowly backwards, that he might enjoy the divine presence. A temple was erected on mount Palatine, and the gravest persons of the state were compelled to officiate at the altar in the meanest functions; yet the court of this god of Emesa was considered as imperfect till a female of rank was admitted to his bed. Pallas was at first chosen, but the moon, under her African name of Astarte, was deemed a more suitable consort for the Syrian deity. Her image was transported from Carthage to Rome, and the day of these mystic nuptials was observed as a grand festival throughout the empire.

The childish amusements and sensual gratification of the emperor surpassed, if possible, the folly of his devotion. Elagabalus (for by that name only he was now known) abandoned himself to the grossest pleasures with ungoverned fury; the powers of art were summoned to his aid; a confused number of women, wines, and viands revived his jaded appetites; the invention of a new sauce was liberally rewarded, and the provinces were ransacked to find new victims to his lusts. A vestal virgin, ravished from her asylum, was insufficient to satisfy his eager thirst for infamy, and the mas-

ter

ter of the Roman world affected the dress and manners of the female sex. The principal dignities of the state were dishonoured by the promotion of his numerous Catamites, one of whom was invested with the title of the emperor's, or, as he more properly termed himself, the empress's husband.

The licentious soldiers, who had raised to the throne the dissolute son of Caracalla, blushed at their ignominious choice, and observed with pleasure the opening virtues of his cousin Alexander, the son of Mamæa. The crafty Mæsa, sensible of the inevitable consequence of the vices of Elagabalus, regarded Alexander as the support of her family, and persuaded the emperor, in a moment of fondness, to invest him with
A. D. 221. the title of Cæsar. But jealousy soon succeeded this hasty effusion of kindness, and having in vain attempted the life of his cousin by fraud, the tyrant resolved to assail it by force. He degraded him from his rank of Cæsar, but the Prætorian guards declared themselves the protectors of the youth of Alexander, and their rage was with difficulty appeased by the tears and promises of the terrified emperor. Yet even the mean soul of Elagabalus revolted at the abject dependence of his situation. A second tumult, excited by the report of Alexander's death, was attended by
the

the punishment of several of the leaders. This unseasonable severity proved fatal to the emperor, his mother, and his minions. Elagabalus, after a reign of four years and three months, was massacred by the Prætorian guards, his body dragged with contempt through the streets, and A. D. 222. his memory branded with just infamy March 10. by the senate.

His imperious murderers raised to the throne, at the age of seventeen, Alexander, who assumed the name of Severus. His liberality endeared him to the army, his virtues to the senate. But though he possessed the titles and powers of imperial dignity, the reins of government were held by the hands of two women, his mother Mamæa, and his grandmother Mæsa. The speedy death of the latter, left the former sole regent. Elagabalus had offended the prejudices of the Romans by joining in the acts of the senate the name of his mother Soæmias, who was placed by the side of the consuls, and subscribed as a regular member the decrees of the legislative assembly. Her more prudent sister declined the odious and useless prerogative; and a law was enacted, excluding women for ever from the senate. The substance, not the pageantry, was the object of Mamæa's manly ambition, and her dominion over her son was lasting and uncontrolled. Alexander had, with her con-

sent, married the daughter of a Patrician; but his respect for his father-in-law and love for his consort, were inconsistent with the interest of his mother. The Patrician was executed, and the empress banished into Africa. Yet, some acts of avarice excepted, the tenour of Mamæa's administration was for the benefit of the empire and her son. A council of state was formed of sixteen of the wisest and most virtuous senators; Ulpian, distinguished for his knowledge and observance of the laws, was placed at the head of it. The city was purged from foreign superstition and luxury, and merit was the sole recommendation for civil or military promotion. But the education of the young emperor became the most important care of Mamæa, and the fortunate soil assisted the hand of cultivation. The simple journal of his occupations attests the purity of his disposition. The first moments of the day were consecrated to devotion; the hours in immediate succession were dedicated to business. The charms of literature relieved the fatigues of public assiduity, and the exercises of the body succeeded to those of the mind. After a slight dinner, business was resumed; and his supper, the principal meal of the Romans, was served with temperate frugality. The company at it consisted of a few select friends, and a conversation familiar and instructive supplied the

the place of licentious songs and wanton dances. Since the accession of Commodus, the Roman world had for forty years groaned beneath the various vices of four successive emperors. During thirteen years, from the death of Elagabalus, it enjoyed the refreshing fruits of imperial virtue; the provinces flourished in prosperity, the people in plenty, and the senate was restored to dignity and freedom.

The name of Antoninus had been prostituted to the infamy of the high priest of Emesa; and Alexander, though importuned by the senate, refused the lustre of a borrowed appellation, whilst he endeavoured to revive the glory and happiness of the Antonines. But a dangerous and necessary enterprise remained for the emperor in the proposed reform of the army, rendered by long impunity impatient of discipline, and averse to obedience. In the execution of his design, Alexander affected to display his love, and to conceal his fear, of the military order. By a rigid œconomy, he supplied a fund for the immediate pay of the troops. In marches, they were relieved from the former obligation of carrying seventeen days provision: their luxury was diverted to ornaments of martial pomp; and the emperor, by his example, endeavoured to restore a faint image of that discipline to which the Romans owed their empire.

Though the Prætorian guards had been attached to the youth of Alexander, yet they were more dissatisfied with his prudent virtues than with the lavish vices of Elagabalus. The præfect Ulpian, the friend of the laws and the people, was the supposed patron of reform, and the avowed object of their hatred. A trifling incident inflamed them into mutiny; and during three days civil war in the city, the life of the minister was defended by a grateful people. But the people were forced to yield to the rage of the soldiers, and resign with a sigh the unfortunate Ulpian to his fate, who was pursued into the palace, and massacred at the feet of his afflicted master; who vainly strove to obtain his pardon from the inexorable assassins. It was only by the arts of dissimulation and patience the emperor ventured to avenge his murdered friend and insulted dignity. Dion Cassius, the historian, commanded with the spirit of ancient discipline the legions in Pannonia; their brethren at Rome, supporting the general cause of military licence, demanded his head. But on this occasion Alexander, instead of yielding to their clamours, appointed him his colleague in the consulship. Yet Cassius was advised to avoid the resentment of the soldiers, to retire from the city, and spend the greatest part of his magistracy at his villas in Campania. Amidst repeated mutinies, one fact deserves

deserves to be recorded, as it illustrates the manners of the troops, and exhibits a singular instance of their return to obedience. Whilst the emperor lay at Antioch, in his Persian expedition, the rage of a legion was excited by the punishment of some soldiers, who had been discovered in the baths of the women. Alexander mounted on his tribunal, represented the necessity of discipline. His mild expostulation was interrupted by their seditious clamours. "Reserve," said the undaunted emperor, "your shouts, till you take the field; be silent in the presence of your sovereign and benefactor, or I shall no longer style you soldiers but *citizens*; if those indeed deserve to be ranked among the meanest of the people who disclaim the laws of Rome." His menaces inflamed the fury of the legion, they already brandished their arms. "Your courage," continued the intrepid Alexander, "would be more nobly displayed in battle; you may destroy me, but cannot intimidate; and the justice of the republic would punish your crime, and revenge my death." The legion persisted in clamorous sedition, when the emperor pronounced, with a firm voice, the decisive sentence; "*Citizens*, lay down your arms, and depart in peace to your respective habitations." The tempest was instantly appeased, the soldiers covered with grief

and shame, obeyed and confessed the justice of the sentence, and it was not till after an interval of thirty days, and the punishment of several centurions, that the emperor consented to restore the grateful legion which faithfully served him when living, and avenged him when dead.

The abilities of Alexander seem however inadequate to the difficulties of his situation, and the firmness of his conduct to the purity of his intentions. The pride and avarice of his mother cast a shade on his glory, the fatigues of the Persian war irritated military discontent, and the unsuccessful event degraded his character as a general and a foldier; every circumstance combined to hasten a revolution which distracted the Roman empire with a series of internal calamities.

An important edict of Antoninus Caracalla had communicated the name and privileges of Roman citizens to all the free inhabitants of the empire. The early victories of the republic added more to its power than wealth. Italy paid her tribute in military service, and the Punic wars were maintained at the sole expence of the Romans; the people submitted to the burthen in confidence of reaping the rich harvest of their labours. Their expectations were not disappointed; the course of a few years brought into Rome the riches of Syracuse, of Carthage, of Macedonia and Asia; and the

the Roman people were for ever delivered from the weight of taxes. The tributes of Asia, from the time of Pompey, were raised to about four millions and an half. Under the last of the Ptolemies, the revenue of Egypt is reported to have amounted to two millions and a half. Gaul was enriched by rapine, as Egypt by commerce, and Carthage had been condemned to pay four millions sterling within fifty years, as a slight acknowledgement of the superiority of Rome. The mines of Spain, the Peru and Mexico of the old world, had attracted the rapacious industry of the Phœnicians, and provoked the oppression of the natives. One mine near Carthage yielded silver to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds a year, and twenty thousand pounds weight of gold was annually received from the provinces of Asturia, Gallicia, and Lusitania.

From these faint lights we are induced to believe the income of the Roman provinces must have amounted to fifteen or twenty millions of our money, a revenue apparently adequate to the military establishments and moderate court of Augustus; yet the latter conclusion is overturned by the conduct of that prince. No sooner had he assumed the reins of government, than he declared the tributes insufficient, and intimated the necessity of throwing part of the burden on Rome

and Italy. The introduction of the customs was followed by the establishment of an excise. The rate of the former varied from an eighth to a fortieth part of the commodity, and the productions raised or manufactured by the subjects of the empire were treated with more indulgence than the unpopular commerce of Arabia and India. The excise was general, but moderate ; it seldom exceeded one *per cent.* and comprehended whatever was sold in the public market, or by auction. The deficiency of this tax, for the purposes of a permanent military establishment, introduced an imposition on legacies and inheritances. It did not take place unless the object was of a certain value, probably a hundred pieces of gold ; nor was it exacted from the nearest of kin, on the father's side. Such a tax was particularly adapted to the Romans, whose wills were not restrained by the modern fetters of entails and settlements, and though only fixed at a twentieth part, in the course of two or three generations, the whole property of the subject is computed to have passed through the coffers of the state.

In the early part of Nero's reign, that prince had conceived a design of abolishing the customs and excise. From the execution of this scheme, he was dissuaded by the wisest of the senators. Trajan and the Antonines were content to alleviate

ate the burden, which they considered it impossible to remove. The prodigality of Caracalla, and the insatiate avarice of his army, soon impelled him to a different conduct. The twentieth charged on legacies and inheritances was the most productive of the Roman imposts, as it continually increased with the extension of the Roman city. The new citizens found a compensation for new taxes in the privileges they acquired, and the road to fortune and honours that was opened to them. But when Caracalla compelled the provincials to assume the general title of citizens, the distinction was lost, the peculiar advantage was annihilated, but the burden was continued; instead of a twentieth, the son of Severus exacted a tenth, and during his reign (for the proportion was restored after his death) oppressed the whole empire with impartial rapacity.

Though the provincials were thus rendered subject to the peculiar imposts of Roman citizens, yet the maxims of Caracalla and Elagabalus allowed not an exemption from their former tributes. These were reduced by the virtues of Alexander to a thirtieth part of what was collected at the time of his accession; but in the succeeding reigns, the noxious weed sprung up with redoubled vigour, and in the course of history, we shall be repeatedly compelled to enter into a melancholy

choly explanation of the land-tax, capitation, and the various contributions, from the provinces, of corn, wine, and oil, for the use of the court, the army, and the capital.

We now return to the Emperor, from whose conduct this transient view of the finances has induced us to digress. The ill success of the Persian war had diminished the respect of the soldiers, the idea of reform had alienated their affections. Alexander, returned from his Persian expedition, had assembled and commanded in person a large army on the banks of the Rhine. The important care of training the new levies was entrusted to an officer of the name of Maximin, who had been successively promoted to the first military command. One day, as he entered the field of exercise, the troops, either from a sudden impulse, or a formed conspiracy, saluted him emperor, silenced his feeble remark in their loud acclamations, and hastened to establish his throne by the murder of Alexander Severus. The circumstances of the death of this amiable and unfortunate prince are variously related. It is affirmed, that after taking a short and frugal repast in the presence of his army, he had retired to his tent for the necessary refreshment of sleep; and that a party of his guards breaking in, assassinated him with a multitude of wounds.

wounds. But a more probable account assures us, that Maximin was saluted emperor by a detachment, at a considerable distance from the head-quarters ; that Alexander had time to awaken a temporary sense of loyalty among the legions, but their promises of fidelity vanished at the approach of Maximin ; that, thus hopeless and deserted, the unfortunate emperor withdrew to his tent, and awaited in retirement his certain and impending fate. But it is added, that in his last moments, the son of Mamæa disgraced the former constancy of his life, and that he met the mortal stroke with unavailing cries and degrading intreaties. His mother was involved in his ruin, and participated in that destruction to which her pride and avarice had largely contributed. The most faithful of his friends were sacrificed to the first fury of the soldiers, others survived only to experience the cruelty of his successor, and to lament the unhappy end of a virtuous prince, who, for thirteen years, had governed the Roman world, at least with mildness and moderation, if not with firmness and ability.

CHAPTER V.

THE ELEVATION AND TYRANNY OF MAXIMIN—CIVIL
WARS—VIOLENT DEATHS OF MAXIMIN AND HIS
SON—OF MAXIMUS AND BALBINUS—AND OF
THE THREE GORDIANS—USURPATION AND
SECULAR GAMES OF PHILIP—THE STATE
OF PERSIA—THE STATE OF GERMANY,

THE murder of Alexander Severus, and the elevation of Maximin, presented to the Roman people the melancholy reflection that private virtue could not guard from treason the throne, and that the most degrading extraction could not preclude an ambitious barbarian from ascending it. Maximin was a peasant of Thrace, and in the progress of the emperor Severus through that province, was first elevated to royal notice and approbation. His strength and skill displayed in wrestling and running, procured him permission to enlist among the troops; and his valour and strict attention to discipline, advanced him, during the reign of Severus and his son, to the rank of centurion,

centurion. Gratitude forbade him to serve under the murderer of Caracalla, and his martial spirit refused to acknowledge the effeminate sway of Elagabalus. On the accession of Alexander, he returned to court, was placed in an honourable and useful situation, and appointed tribune of the fourth legion, which, by care and attention, he rendered the best disciplined in the whole army. The soldiers, whose favour he preserved, bestowed on him the names of Hercules and Ajax; and the emperor who esteemed him, if his barbarous manners had not forbidden, would have given him his own sister in marriage, and accepted him as his brother-in-law.

These marks of regard, instead of securing the allegiance, served only to inflame the ambition of the restless barbarian; and the destruction of his benefactor and sovereign, raised him to be the scourge and terror of the Roman empire. His mind uncultivated by literature, his appearance unpolished by the arts of civil life, were contrasted with the amiable manners of the unhappy Alexander; and the tyrant, conscious of his own deficiencies, and depending on the attachment of his soldiers, persecuted with unrelenting cruelty the rest of mankind. Desirous of extirpating the remembrance of his original obscurity, he confounded in the same indiscriminate ruin, those who had

had spurned at his humbler fortunes, with those who had relieved his distress and assisted his rising hopes. Magnus, a consular senator, was accused of conspiring against him. Without even the form of a trial, Magnus was put to death, and four thousand of his supposed accomplices involved in his fate. The nobility of Rome, who had governed provinces, who had commanded armies, and triumphed as consuls, were sewed up in the hides of slaughtered animals, exposed to wild beasts, and beaten to death with clubs. From his camp on the Rhine or Danube, (for he scorned to visit Italy or Rome) he issued, in the language of despotism, the unfeeling dictates of sanguinary barbarism, and trampled on every principle of law or justice, supported by the avowed power of the sword. As long as the cruelty of Maximin was confined to the senators at Rome, or the courtiers who attended him, the body of the people regarded it with indifference; but their resentment was aroused as soon as the avarice of the tyrant attacked public property. Every city was possessed of an independent revenue to purchase corn, and supply the expences of games and entertainments; by a single edict, Maximin confiscated the whole. The temples were stripped of their offerings, and the statues of heroes and gods melted down and coined into money; the soldiers them-

themselves blushed at the sacrilegious plunder, and a cry of indignation was heard throughout the empire.

The procurator of Africa rivalled his master in oppression and cruelty. He had pronounced an unjust decree against some opulent youths of that country; the execution of it would A. D. 237, have reduced them to abject want. A April, respite for three days was, with difficulty, procured, and employed in preparations for the destruction of the guilty treasurer. A band of peasants was collected, armed with clubs, axes, and the rustic instruments of husbandry. The conspirators concealed their daggers beneath their garments, and in the moment of audience, plunged them into the heart of their enemy. By the assistance of their train, they secured the little town of Thyssdrus, and erecting the standard of rebellion, opposed the mild virtues of Gordianus to the implacable fury of the tyrant. Gordianus the pro-consul of Africa, deprecated with tears, and accepted with reluctance, the dangerous honour: his family was the most illustrious of the Roman senate; on his father's side, he was descended from the Gracchi; on his mother's, from the emperor Trajan. His fortune was equal to his birth, and in the practice of virtue and the pursuit of letters, the last remains of the age of the

the Antonines, he had attained to fourscore years, when his feeble frame was compelled to assume the purple, and stain a spotless life with civil blood; his son, equally amiable in his character, though less pure in his manners, was associated with him in the empire.

The Gordians, as soon as they had appeased the first tumult of election, removed their court to Carthage, and by a deputation of the noblest provincials solicited the approbation of the senate. The inclinations of that assembly were neither doubtful nor divided. The Gordians were connected with the most illustrious families of Rome; and their mild disposition opened the prospect of a civil, and even republican government. The hatred of Maximin towards the senate was avowed and unabated, and their very safety prompted them to embrace the enterprize as their only hopes of refuge. In the temple of Castor, according to an ancient form of secrecy, the whole body of the senate was convoked, and the consul Syllanus, after disclosing the intelligence and animating them with his eloquence, concluded with, “Maximin
“ is an enemy, may his enmity soon expire with
“ him, and may we long enjoy the prudence and
“ felicity of Gordian the father, the valour and
“ constancy of Gordian the son.” The noble ardour of the consul revived the languid spirit of
the

the senate; the election of the Gordians was ratified, Maximin and his son were pronounced enemies, and liberal rewards offered for their destruction. A detachment of Prætorian guards had been left at Rome to command the capital; and the præfect Vetalianus, conspicuous for his cruelty and attachment to the tyrant, maintained his authority over the city and senate. Before their resolves could transpire, a tribune and some soldiers were commissioned to take his life; they executed their orders with alacrity and resolution, and with their bloody daggers in their hands proclaimed to the people the news of the revolution. The promise of a large donative appeased and allured the soldiers, the statues of Maximin were thrown down, and the authority of the Gordians acknowledged throughout Rome and Italy. For the defence of the last, twenty senators were selected; each was appointed to act in his respective department, and to enrol and discipline the Italian youth; and the governors of the several provinces were exhorted by deputies to defend the cause of the Roman senate.

But whilst the election of the Gordians was thus ratified and supported, the Gordians themselves were no more. Capelianus, go- A. D. 237,
vernor of Mauritania, had invaded the July 3d.
defenceless province; the younger Gordian, at the

head of an undisciplined multitude, marched out to meet him, and his useless valour procured him an honourable death in battle ; the elder Gordian, whose reign had not exceeded thirty-six days, put an end to his life on the intelligence of the defeat ; and Carthage opened her gates, and submitted to the rapacity of the victor.

Rome received with consternation the fate of the Gordians, and the senate, convened in the temple of Concord, remained in silent terror, till awakened by a senator of the name and family of Trajan. He represented to them their only remaining alternatives ; to meet the tyrant bravely in the field, or tamely submit to tortures and ignominious death. " Let us elect," continued he, " two emperors, one of whom may conduct the war against the public enemy, whilst his colleague remains at Rome to direct the civil administration. I cheerfully expose myself to the danger and envy of the nomination, and give my vote in favour of Maximus and Balbinus ; ratify my choice, conscript fathers, or appoint in their place, others more worthy of empire."

The merit of the candidates was instantly acknowledged, and the house resounded with the acclamations of " Long life and victory to the emperors Maximus and Balbinus."

The virtues of the emperors justified the hopes of the

A. D. 237.

July 9th.

the Romans. Balbinus had acquired no inconsiderable reputation as an orator and poet; but the wisdom and justice he had displayed as a magistrate, in the administration of the interior provinces, were better claims to imperial dignity. Maximus, by his victories over the Sarmatians and Germans, had established his character as a general, and commanded the esteem and confidence of his followers; but the solemn moment of their returning thanks to the gods for their elevation, was disturbed by the clamours of a licentious multitude. These asserted their right to consent to the election of a sovereign, and insisted, to the two princes already chosen, a third should be joined, of the family of the Gordians. Maximus and Balbinus, at the head of the city guards, in vain endeavoured to disperse the multitude; and it was thought prudent to relinquish a contest which might have been fatal to both parties. A boy, only thirteen years of age, the grandson of the elder, and nephew of the younger Gordian, was produced to the people, and invested with the title of Cæsar; the tumult was appeased, and Rome prepared for her defence against the common enemy.

During these revolutions in Africa and Rome, the mind of Maximin was agitated with various and contending passions. The intelligence of the

fate of the Gordians, was followed by the election of Maximus and Balbinus, and the preparations of Italy and Rome. The army of Maximin was habituated to three years successive victories; but the generous spirit of the Barbarian disdained to quit the hostile banks of the Danube, or march against his private enemies, until he had subdued those of the public.

It was not till the ensuing spring that Maximin led his hardy and disciplined troops to the foot of the Julian Alps. The silence and desolation
A.D. 238. that reigned through the frontiers of February. Italy, impressed with gloomy apprehensions the minds of the soldiers. The towns and villages were abandoned by the inhabitants, the cattle were removed, the bridges broke down, and every thing proclaimed a determined spirit of resistance. The wise orders of the generals and senate, were to protract the war, and to waste in repeated enterprises that force, which, entire, they were unequal to contend with. Aquileia had first the honour of resisting the fury of the tyrant. On a singular bridge, constructed of hogheads, he had passed a stream of the Hadriatic, swelled by the melting of winter snows; the beautiful vineyards in the neighbourhood of Aquileia were rooted up by his rage, the suburbs were demolished, and the city attacked on every side.

The

The defence of it was entrusted to Crispinus and Menophilus, two of the twenty lieutenants of the senate, who had thrown themselves into the city with a small band of veterans. The walls, decayed during a long peace, were hastily repaired, military engines were provided, and every species of fortification was rapidly executed. But the best defence of Aquileia was in the constancy of her citizens; these, animated with the love of freedom, and desperate from the dread of punishment, repulsed the repeated attacks of the tyrant, destroyed his machines with artificial fire, and sustained, with steady resolution, that force at which the whole Roman empire trembled.

Maximus, from the important city of Ravenna, which he had advanced to secure, beheld the siege of Aquileia with incessant anxiety. He dreaded lest the tyrant, tired out with obstinate resistance, should relinquish the fruitless enterprise, and march directly towards Rome. The fate of the empire must then have been decided in one battle; a few levies from the enervated youth of Italy, and a doubtful body of German auxiliaries, were all the troops he could oppose to the veteran legions of the Rhine and Danube. But the stroke of domestic treason relieved the just apprehensions of Maximus, and secured the senate from the menaced vengeance of Maximin.

Though Aquileia had scarce experienced the common miseries of a siege ; though her resources and her strength still remained entire ; the soldiers of Maximin had suffered every calamity it is possible to describe. To the dangers and hardships of war, were added the inclemency of the season, the contagion of disease, and the horror of famine. The destructive rage of the tyrant had completed the ruin of the open country, and his ferocious inhumanity had filled the rivers with slain, and polluted their streams with blood. Despair and disaffection diffused their spirit through the troops, and the ill-timed severity of Maximin served to exasperate, instead of allaying the general discontent. Some Prætorian soldiers, who trembled for their wives and children at Rome, determined to secure them, by executing the sentence of the senate. Maximin was slain in his A. D. 238, tent, after a reign of three years and a April, few days ; his son (whom he had associated in his power) partook in his destruction, and Anulinus, his præfect, with several other ministers of his cruelty, received the tardy punishment of their crimes. The gates of Aquileia were thrown open to his destroyers, the head of Maximin, on a spear, was borne in triumph through the streets ; a liberal market was provided for the impatient troops, and they readily joined in acknowledging
the

the authority of the senate, and swore allegiance, and submitted to the command of their lawful emperors.

The hardy body of Maximin was suited to his unfeeling soul; his stature exceeded eight feet, and incredible circumstances are related of his matchless strength and appetite. The death of the brutal savage was received at Rome with a joy easier to conceive than describe. The return of Maximus was a triumphal procession, and he entered the capital, with his colleague and the young Gordian, amidst the acclamations of the people, and the applause of the senate. The conduct of the two emperors fulfilled the expectations of their subjects; they administered justice in person, and the rigid virtue of Maximus was tempered by the mild clemency of Balbinus. "What reward may we expect for delivering Rome from a monster?" was the question asked by Maximus, in a moment of freedom and confidence. "The love of the senate, of the people, and of all mankind," was the ready answer of Balbinus. "I fear," replied his discerning colleague, "the hatred of the soldiers, and the fatal effects of their resentment." The event too well justified his apprehensions.

During the absence of Maximus in Italy, Balbinus, in Rome, had been engaged in scenes of

blood and discord. Distrust and jealousy had even occupied the senate, and every senator concealed arms beneath his robe. Two veterans of the guards had intruded themselves, in the hour of deliberation, on the assembly; their insolence was observed, and chastised by the daggers of Gallianus and Mæcenus, two dignified senators, who advancing to the door, exhorted the multitude to massacre the Prætorians, as the adherents of the tyrant. A civil war lasted many days, and the Prætorian camp was frequently, though unsuccessfully, assailed by the people, assisted by numerous bands of gladiators. The emperor Balbinus in vain attempted to reconcile the contending factions; their animosity, smothered for a while, burst out with increase of violence; and the people and soldiers equally despised a prince, who had neither the spirit nor power to command or restrain his subjects.

Though the formidable army of Maximin, on his death, had acknowledged the authority of Maximus, yet the haughty spirit of the Prætorians was far from being reconciled to obedience. The public entry of the emperors had united in the same body, those who had served under the tyrant, with those who had remained at Rome; they communicated to each other their complaints and apprehensions, and they recollected
with

with indignation, the fate of a prince chosen by the army, and regarded with aversion the emperors elected by the senate. Yet their fate was in their own hands, and whilst they were masters of their arms, they might convince the world, they also were masters of the Roman empire.

The jealousy which soon prevailed between the two emperors, was ill calculated to crush this growing discontent. Maximus despised Balbinus, as an indolent noble; and Balbinus disdained his colleague, as an ignorant soldier. The whole city was employed in the Capitoline games, and the emperors were left alone in their palace; on a sudden they were alarmed by the approach of a body of Prætorian guards; the moments that might have been employed in collecting assistance, were wasted in fruitless recriminations. The arrival of the soldiers put an end to their A. D. 238, debate, and after being stripped of their July 15th. imperial ornaments, the bodies of the emperors of the senate, (for such was the insulting language of their assassins) mangled with a thousand wounds, were exposed to the insults or pity of the people.

In the space of a few successive months, six princes had perished by the sword. Gordian, who had already received the title of Cæsar, was, at the age of nineteen, invested with the purple, and

and called by the soldiers to the toils of sovereignty. His early youth and untainted innocence, promised at least happiness, if not glory to the empire; but the conduct of his ministers, who had abused the simplicity of his inexperienced understanding, obscured the mild lustre of his virtues. On his accession, he was at first surrounded by his mother's eunuchs; and by a conspiracy of these wretches, the eyes of the prince were blinded to the miseries of his oppressed subjects. Escaping from this ignominious slavery, he devolved his confidence on a minister, the sole object of whose counsels was the glory of the sovereign, and the happiness of the people. Misitheus was first introduced to the favour of Gordian by the extent of his learning; and love, soon after, prevailed on the prince to marry the daughter of his faithful and virtuous servant. In two letters extant, Misitheus congratulates the emperor, that he is escaped from the dominion of the eunuchs, and that he is sensible of the value of his deliverance; and Gordian, in his reply, acknowledges his past errors, and laments the situation of a monarch, so frequently rendered inaccessible to truth.

The youth of Misitheus had been dedicated to letters, but his versatile genius proved him in age, not incapable of the exercise of arms. When appointed

appointed Prætorian præfect, he discharged the duties of his situation with vigilance and activity. The Persians had invaded Mesopotamia, and the emperor, at the persuasion of his father-in-law, opened, for the last time recorded in history, the Temple of Janus, and marched in person to repel the enemy. The Persians retired on

his approach, abandoned the cities A. D. 242.

they had taken, and retreated from the Euphrates to the Tigris. The emperor, in announcing his success to the senate, ascribed it to the wisdom and precautions of his minister. But with the life of Misitheus, who died of a flux, not without suspicions of poison, the prosperity of Gordian expired; and his appointment of Philip, by birth an Arab, and by profession a robber, to

the præfecture, proved fatal to the life A. D. 243.

and power of the emperor. The boldness of the new præfect aspired to the throne; the minds of the soldiers were irritated by an artificial scarcity, and the arms, which ought to have defended, were turned against their master. By a sentence of the soldiers, he was stript and led away to death,

and a small monument on the banks A. D. 244,

of the river Aboras, attested the spot March.

of his execution, after a reign of scarce six years.

Philip, raised to the empire by the votes of the army, was desirous of effacing the obscurity of his

his birth in the magnificence of his entertainments, and on his return from the east, solemnized with pomp the secular games. These, since their revival A. D. 248. by Augustus, had been celebrated by April 21st. Claudius, Domitian, and by Severus, and were renewed for the fifth time by Philip. The allotted interval between them was either an hundred, or an hundred and ten years, but this regulation was little regarded by the policy of the emperor.

Though the limits of the Roman empire were still the same, yet the vigour which animated it daily declined, and the Persian monarchy, restored by Artaxerxes, seemed to rival the waning power of Rome. The kingdom of Persia was computed to contain, in the last century, five hundred and fifty-four cities, sixty thousand villages, and about forty millions of souls; nor is there any reason to suppose it was less prosperous during the reign of Artaxerxes; that prince had triumphed over the Scythians and Indians, and considered the Romans an enemy worthy of his arms. Rome, though capable of only opposing a part to the whole force of Persia, had generally maintained her reputation and superiority. Under the reign of Marcus, the Roman generals penetrated as far as Ctesiphon, and destroyed the seat of the Parthian king; yet Ctesiphon, in thirty-three

three years, had sufficiently recovered its strength to maintain an obstinate though unsuccessful resistance against the emperor Severus. A. D. 230.

Artaxerxes, as soon as he was perfectly established on the throne, claimed the provinces of Asia, and declared war against the Romans; and Alexander Severus resolved, on this important occasion, to lead his armies in person. In an oration of the emperor's still extant, he is represented as obtaining a considerable A. D. 233. victory; but a contemporary historian, who describes the plan of the war with minuteness, informs us, after several successful skirmishes, of the retreat of the Roman army with difficulty and loss; yet the valour it had displayed convinced the Persian monarch how arduous was his enterprise, nor even during the confusion which followed the death of Alexander was he able to wrest from the hands of Rome the little province of Mesopotamia.

The reign of Artaxerxes forms a memorable æra in the history of the east, and even in that of Rome. His character was marked by those commanding features which generally distinguish conquerors. His code of laws was preserved as the foundation of civil and religious policy till the last period of Persian monarchy, and he bequeathed to his son Sapor his em- A. D. 240.

pire

pire and ambitious designs against the Romans; to both nations the source of destructive wars and reciprocal calamities.

The Persians, long civilized and corrupted, possessed not the intrepid hardiness of the northern nations; nor did the science of war ever make any considerable progress in the east. An inconsiderate multitude trusted more to their numbers than their courage, and more to their courage than their discipline. Their infantry was a croud of spiritless peasants, but their cavalry was formed from the nobles, taught from seven years old to speak truth, shoot with the bow, and ride with skill. In the two last, they were unrivalled, and their armies of light and heavy cavalry, equally formidable by the weight of their charge, and in the rapidity of their retreat, threatened with their hostile motions and increasing numbers, the eastern provinces of the declining empire of Rome.

A more just terror was inspired along the northern frontiers by the hardy barbarians who inhabited the woods and forests of Germany. This country, containing the whole of modern Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Livonia, and the greater part of Poland, was peopled by the tribes of one great nation, whose complexion, manners, and language denoted a common origin, and preserved a striking resemblance. The large
and

and masculine limbs of the natives were formed by the keen air and severe climate. The immense forests which overshadowed part of Germany and Poland, by excluding the rays of the sun, might contribute to the former severity; their winters, and the complaints of ancient writers of intense frosts are substantiated by two circumstances of unequivocal nature. 1. The great rivers which covered the Rhine and Danube were frequently frozen over, and capable of supporting the numerous armies, the cavalry, and even the heavy waggons of the barbarians; modern ages have not presented an instance of a like phænomenon. 2. The rein deer, whose constitution supports and even requires intense cold, who is found on the rock of Spitzberg, and delights in the snows of Lapland and Siberia, was then a native of Germany, though at present he cannot subsist in any country to the south of the Baltic.

Though it is difficult to ascertain the influence of the climate of ancient Germany over the minds and bodies of the natives, yet we may impartially conclude these hardy children of the north possessed a strength better adapted to violent exertions than to patient labour, and were inspired with a constitutional bravery, the result of nerves and spirits. Their languid souls were only to be roused by some new and powerful sensation; and war and danger

danger seemed amusements to the fierce temper of the barbarians. In the intervals of peace, deep gaming and excessive drinking occupied their hours ; both relieved them from the pain of thinking ; the one by inflaming their passions, the other by extinguishing their reason.

Of letters, the Germans were totally ignorant, and wretchedly destitute of arts ; even in the time of Tacitus, they had no cities. Their habitations were huts of a low circular figure, built of rough timber, pierced at the top, to leave a free passage for the smoke ; and they cloathed themselves chiefly in furs. The game of the forests supplied its inhabitants with food and exercise, and their monstrous herds of cattle, less remarkable for beauty than utility, formed the principal object of their wealth. Averse to agriculture, they exacted from the earth, with a reluctant hand, a small quantity of corn.

Gold, silver, and iron were extremely scarce in Germany. The veins of silver, which reward the attention of the princes of Brunswick and Saxony, the mines of iron, with which Sweden supplies Europe, were either neglected or unknown. Among the borderers, some coins had been introduced by the Romans, but the more distant tribes were absolutely unacquainted with the use of money, and their confined traffic was carried on by the exchange of commodities.

A war-

A warlike nation like the Germans, without either cities, letters, arts, or money, found some compensation for this savage state, in the enjoyment of freedom. Some tribes, on the coast of the Baltic, acknowledged the authority of kings; but in the far greater part of Germany, the form of government was a democracy, not so much controlled by positive laws, as by the occasional ascendant of valour and eloquence. A youth, born of free parents, on attaining the age of manhood, was introduced into the general council of his countrymen. The assembly of the warriors was convened at stated seasons, or on sudden emergencies. The trial of public offences, the election of magistrates, and the great business of peace and war, were determined by its independent voice. The magistrate might deliberate and persuade, the people only could resolve and execute. A general of the tribe was elected on occasions of danger; if the danger was pressing, several tribes united in the choice of the same general: but this power expired with the war, and in times of peace the German tribes acknowledged not any supreme chief. Princes were, however, appointed in the general assembly, but the authority of these magistrates was more absolute over the property than the persons of the Germans. The disposal of the first was absolutely

vested in their hands, and they distributed it every year according to a new division; at the same time, they were not authorised to punish with death, to imprison, or even to strike a private citizen.

On the chastity of the German women, Tacitus dwells with pleasure; and the high-spirited sentiments of these matrons were equal to their conjugal fidelity. The fainting armies of their country have, more than once, been driven back on the enemy by the generous despair of the women, who dreaded death much less than servitude.

The religious system of the Germans was dictated by their wants, their fears, and their ignorance. They adored the great visible objects and agents of nature, the sun, the moon, the fire, and the earth; they trusted to the arts of divination, and considered human sacrifices as most acceptable; some tribes of the north seem to have embraced the notion of transmigration, others imagined a gross paradise of immortal drunkenness, yet all agreed, that a life spent in arms, and a glorious death in battle, were the best preparations for a happy futurity: but the immortality promised by their priests was in some measure conferred by their bards, who still attract the notice of all who have attempted to investigate the antiquities of the Celts, the Scandinavians, and the Germans.

Such

Such was the situation, and such were the manners of the ancient Germans; but though all contributed to form a people of military heroes, yet we find, during more than two hundred and fifty years that elapsed from the defeat of Varus to the reign of Decius, these barbarians made few attempts, and no material impression on the luxurious provinces of the empire. Their progress was checked by their want of arms and discipline, and their fury was diverted by intestine divisions.

The face of a German army displayed their poverty of iron; their long spears were headed with a sharp, but narrow point of this metal; swords they seldom used; their shields were ofier or wood, and their military dress a loose garment; their horses were neither beautiful, swift, nor properly broke; their infantry, in which their strength consisted, rushed to battle with discordant shouts and disordered ranks, and if ever they prevailed over the artificial bravery of the Romans, it was by a sudden effort of native valour. Their civil dissensions were fomented by the intrigues of Rome; and Tacitus describes with pleasure the Bructeri, totally exterminated by the neighbouring tribes.

The general conspiracy which terrified the Romans, in the reign of Marcus, comprehended al-

most all the nations of Germany, and even Sarmatia, from the mouth of the Rhine to that of the Danube. This dangerous invasion was repelled by the firmness and vigilance of the emperor: the spirit of the barbarians was subdued; the Quadi and the Marcomanni, who had taken the lead in the war, were severely punished; and on their repeated revolts, the irritated emperor was resolved to reduce the country, now part of Bohemia and Bavaria, into the form of a province. His designs were disappointed by death; but this formidable league, the only one recorded during two centuries, was entirely dissipated, without leaving any traces behind in Germany.

 CHAPTER VI.

THE EMPERORS DECIUS, GALLUS, ÆMILIANUS, VALE-
 RIAN, AND GALLIENUS—THE GENERAL IR-
 RUPTION OF THE BARBARIANS.

A Calamitous period of twenty years elapsed from the great secular games celebrated by Philip, to the death of the emperor Gallienus. The scarcity of authentic me-
 morials hardly allows the historian to preserve an unbroken thread of narration. In the summer of the year two hundred and forty-nine, a rebellion broke out among the legions in Mæsia. Marinus, a subaltern officer, who was the object of their seditious choice, was destroyed
 with the same inconstancy as he had
 been promoted. Decius, a senator of merit, who had ventured to foretell the event of this tumult, was nominated by the emperor, to restore peace and discipline to the army. He accepted the com-

A. D. 248.

268.

A. D. 249.

mand with reluctance; and the legions of Mæsia forced their judge to become their accomplice. He was invested with the purple, and the defeat of Philip, in a battle near Verona, with his immediate or subsequent death, confirmed to Decius the empire of the Roman world.

The victorious Decius had employed but a few months in the administration of peaceful justice, when he was summoned to the banks of the Da-

nube, by an invasion of the Goths.

A. D. 252.

These Barbarians deduced their origin from the vast island or peninsula of Scandinavia; and the name of the Goths is now lost in that of the Swedes. The principal deities they worshiped, were the god of war, the goddess of generation, and the god of thunder. Their sacrifices, every ninth year, were nine animals of every species, including the human.

In the Edda, a system of mythology compiled in Iceland about the thirteenth century, we distinguish two persons confounded under the name of Odin, the god of war, and the great legislator of Scandinavia. The latter instituted a religion adapted to the climate and people, and subdued numerous tribes on either side the Baltic. But though some faint tradition is preserved of a Scandinavian origin, we must not expect any distinct account of the time and circumstances of their emigra-

emigration. To cross the Baltic, the inhabitants of Sweden possessed sufficient vessels, and the distance from Carlscroon to the nearest ports of Prussia and Pomerania exceeds not an hundred miles. From the commencement of the Christian æra to the age of the Antonines, the Goths were established towards the mouth of the Vistula. Westward of the Goths, the numerous tribes of Vandals spread along the banks of the Oder; and a resemblance of manners and language seem to indicate that the Vandals and the Goths were originally one people. About the reign of Alexander Severus, the province of Dacia experienced the destructive fury of the Goths in their inroads, whose arms were turned against the milder regions of the south; and the march of the Barbarians increased their numbers with the bravest warriors of the Vandalic states. They followed the course of the Borysthenes, through the plains of Poland and Russia, and incorporated in their army the youth of the Bastarnæ and Venedi. The first inherited the northern side of the Carpathian mountains; the last, the tract of country between the Bastarnæ and Finland. As the Goths advanced near the Euxine sea, they encountered a purer race of the Sarmatians; and these are to be distinguished from the Germans by moveable tents or fixed huts, a flowing garment or close dress,

by a marriage of one or several wives ; but, above all, by the use of the Sclavonian or Teutonic language.

The Goths were now in possession of the Ukraine, a country of considerable extent and uncommon fertility. The size of the cattle, the temperature of the air, the aptness of the soil for every species of grain, and the luxuriancy of the vegetation, all displayed the liberality of nature, and tempted the industry of man ; but the Goths withstood all these temptations, and still adhered to a life of poverty and rapine.

The Scythian hords, towards the east, presented the doubtful chance of unprofitable victory ; the Roman territories were far more alluring. Bursting through the province of Dacia, the Barbarians extorted a considerable ransom from Marcianopolis, the capital of the second Mæsia. The invaders retreated with their booty, to return with double force ; and the emperor Decius marched in person against the Gothic army, amounting to seventy thousand men, and already engaged in the siege of Nicopolis. The Goths, commanded by Cniva, on the approach of Decius, relinquished their enterprise to undertake a conquest of greater importance, the siege of Philippopolis, a city of

A. D 250.

Thrace, near the foot of Mount Hæmus. Decius followed them at a distance

tance; but when he thought himself secure from the Barbarians, the camp of the Romans was surprised; the emperor found his safety in flight, and Philippopolis, destitute of succour, was taken by storm. The time, however, consumed in the siege, enabled Decius to revive the courage, and restore the discipline of his troops. He intercepted several parties of Germans, secured the passes, and waited anxiously for an opportunity to retrieve his own glory, and that of the Roman empire.

The mind of Decius, calm and deliberate amidst the tumults of war, revolved the general causes of the decline of the Roman greatness. He found them in the corruption of principles and manners; and to reform these, he determined to revive the office of censor. He submitted the choice of a proper person to the senate, and by their unanimous votes, it was conferred on Valerian, afterwards emperor. But De- A. D. 257.
cious did not reflect that a censor may October 27th.
maintain, but never can restore the morals of a state; and it was easier to vanquish the Goths, than eradicate public vices; yet even in the first of these enterprises, Decius lost his army and life. The Goths were already surrounded on every side, and would have been glad to have purchased an undisturbed retreat at the price of their prison-

prisoners and booty ; but the emperor, confident of victory, refused to hearken to accommodation ; the battle was fought at Forum Trebonii, an obscure town of Mæsia. The onset was favourable to the Romans, though the son of Decius, a youth of fairest hopes, fell in the first attack. But the presumption of the victors, in attempting to pursue the enemy through a morass, changed the fortune of the day ; after an ineffectual struggle, the Roman army was irrecoverably lost, nor could the body of the emperor ever after be found.*

The legions, humbled by this blow, bestowed
A.D. 251. the imperial dignity on Hostilianus,
December. the surviving son of Decius ; but associated to the power, the experience and ability of Gallus. The first care of the new emperor was to treat with the enemy ; he relinquished to them the prisoners and booty they had taken, supplied them with provisions for their retreat, and promised to remit them annually a large sum of gold, provided they never afterwards infested the Roman territories. The degrading stipulation of an ignominious tribute, alienated from the prince the affections of the Romans ; the death of Hostilianus, though in the midst of a pestilence, was interpreted as a personal crime to Gallus ; and the irruption of new swarms of Barbarians, encouraged by the weakness of the empire and the success
of

of their brethren, inflamed the discontent, and confirmed the contempt of his subjects for the emperor.

Æmilianus, governor of Pannonia, disclaimed the disgraceful compact. He rallied the scattered forces of the empire, unexpectedly at-

A. D. 253.

tacked the Barbarians, and routed and pursued them beyond the Danube. His triumphant army proclaimed him emperor. Gallus, informed of the revolt, advanced to meet his aspiring lieutenant in the plains of Spoleto; but the soldiers of Gallus admired and deserted to, his rival; and the murder of the emperor with his son Volusianus, put an end to the war. The senate

willingly confirmed the election of Æ-

A. D. 253.

milianus, whose letters betrayed a mixture of moderation and vanity. He offered to resign to the senate the civil administration, and in quality of their general engaged to deliver the empire from the Barbarians of the north and east.

May.

If the new monarch possessed the abilities, he wanted time to fulfil his splendid promises. The approach of Valerian, who had been sent by Gallus to bring the legions of Gaul and Germany to his aid, decided his fate. The soldiers of Æmilianus, in less than four months after their choice, readily embrued their hands in his blood, and Valerian revenged his be-

A. D. 253.

August.

nefactor

nefactor at the same time that he acquired the throne.

Valerian, the late censor, when invested with the purple, was sixty years of age. His character was high and unfulfilled, but the consciousness of declining vigour induced him to share his power with a more active associate, and his vanity or affection gave the preference to his son Gallienus. The whole period of their joint administration was one series of confusion and calamity, and the Roman empire was continually invaded by the Franks, the Alemanni, the Goths, and the Persians. The first of these derived their origin from a confederacy of the inhabitants of the Lower Rhine and Weser, and assumed the name of Franks or Freedmen. The province of Gaul was protected from their united attacks by the ability of Posthumus, who though he afterwards betrayed the family of Valerian, was ever faithful to the interests of the empire; but Spain during twelve years, the greater part of the reign of Gallienus, was the theatre of their hostilities; and the city of Tarragona was taken and plundered by their rapacious arms. The Alemanni, a body of Suevi, who assumed their name to denote their various lineage and common bravery, ravaged the rich province of Gaul, and a party penetrating across the Danube, and through the Rhætian mountains, advanced

vanced as far as Ravenna. Valerian was absent in the east, and Gallienus on the Rhine. The senators resumed the defence of the republic; the Prætorian guards were recruited by the stoutest plebeians; and the Alemanni, astonished at an army more numerous than their own, retired with their plunder: their retreat was esteemed a victory by the unwarlike Romans.

Gallienus was much less delighted at his capital being delivered from the Barbarians, than alarmed at the spirit of the senate; his timid ingratitude was published to his subjects in an edict which prohibited the senators the exercise of any military employment. Three hundred thousand of the Alemanni were afterwards reported to have been defeated near Milan by the son of Valerian, yet that prince endeavoured to protect Italy by less hostile measures. He espoused Pipa, the daughter of a king of the Marcomanni, a Suevic tribe, and granted to the father an ample settlement in Pannonia.

We have already traced the Goths from Prussia to the mouth of the Borysthenes, and thence to the banks of the Danube. They had extended their settlements over the northern coasts of the Euxine; and admitted by domestic factions into the kingdom of Bosphorus, they seized the sceptre and acquired a naval force. On slight flat-bot-
tomed

tomed barks framed of timber, allured by the wealth of Asia Minor, they committed themselves to an unknown sea. Leaving the coast of Circassia to the left, they appeared before Pityus; and though at first repulsed by the skill of Successianus, on the recall of that officer they resumed the attack, and completed the destruction of the city. Thence circling round the eastern extremity of the Euxine sea, they surpris'd the rich city of Trebizond; the inhabitants were massacred, the buildings destroyed, and the extensive province of Pontus plundered without opposition. The spoils of Trebizond filled a fleet of ships found in the port, and the Goths returned in triumph to their new establishments in the kingdom of Bosphorus.

Their second expedition was directed along the western coast of the Euxine, and they landed in the province of Bithynia. Nicomedia, once the capital of the kings of Bithynia, afforded them an easy conquest. Nice, Prusa, Apamæa, and Cius, surrendered to their arms; and the city of Cyzicus, which formerly had withstood the united force of Mithridates, was only preserved by a rainy season, and the swelling of the river Rhyndacus. On the approach of the autumnal equinox, they hastened their return, after wantonly burning Nice and Nicomedia in their retreat.

The third fleet of the Goths was by far the
most

most numerous, and is computed to have contained fifteen thousand warriors. These steered their course from the Cimmerian into the Thracian Bosphorus, and passing through the Hellespont, after navigating the Ægean sea, anchored in the ports of Piræus, five miles distant from Athens. The native seat of the arts and muses soon yielded to the invincible sons of Odin; but while the conquerors abandoned themselves to plunder and intemperance, their fleet was attacked by a band of peasants commanded by the brave Dexippus. This injury served rather to inflame than dismay the Northern victors; a general conflagration blazed throughout Greece, and the Goths were rapidly advancing toward the confines of Italy, when Gallienus appeared in person to check their progress. Part were incorporated into the service of the empire by an honourable capitulation; part broke through Mæsia, and forcing a passage over the Danube, escaped to their settlements in the Ukraine; and the rest retired with their booty to their vessels, and regained in safety, after ravaging the shores of Troy, the port from whence they sailed.

Whilst the Goths poured destruction through the provinces of Greece, Sapor, the king of Persia, had added to the Persian empire the kingdom of Armenia, after assassinating Chosroes, the king. Inflamed by this conquest, the son of Artaxerxes
had

had spread devastation on either side the Euphrates, and Valerian, in his advanced age, marched in person to the defence of the eastern frontier.

A. D. 260. He passed the Euphrates, encountered, was vanquished, and captured by the Persian monarch, near the walls of Edeſſa. The account of this tranſaction is obſcure; but we trace that the Roman troops, encompaſſed on every ſide, after a vigorous attempt to cut their way through, were forced to yield to the invincible attacks of famine; that the emperor was made a priſoner, and that Sapor, in a moment of triumph, inveſted with the imperial purple Cynedes, an obſcure fugitive of Antioch, who ſacrificed the place of his nativity to ſecure the favour of his maſter. If we may credit the teſtimony of Ammianus Marcellinus, the city of Antioch was ſurpriſed when the inhabitants were engaged in the amuſements of the theatre. Emefa was preſerved by the zeal of the high prieſt, and the reſolution of a few peaſants; but the narrow paſſes of Mount Taurus were forced, and Cæſarea, the capital of Cappadocia, was betrayed by a phyſician, after a gallant and voluntary defence by Demotheus, who cut his way through the ſurrounding Perſians. At the time when the eaſt trembled at the name of Sapor, he received, with a reſpectful letter, a preſent from Odenathus, one of the nobleſt and
moſt

most opulent senators of Palmyra. "Who is this
" Odenathus, (said the haughty victor) that he
" thus insolently presumes to write to his Lord ?
" If he entertains a hope of mitigating his punishment, let him fall prostrate before the foot
" of our throne with his hands bound behind his
" back." The soul of the Palmyrenian was aroused by the injurious menace ; he met Sapor, but he met him in arms. At the head of a little army, collected from the villages of Syria, and the tents of the desert, he hovered round the Persian host, harrassed their retreat, and even carried off several women of the great king ; and the Majesty of Rome oppressed by a Persian, was protected by a Syrian or Arab of Palmyra.

The treatment of Valerian by the inflexible Sapor, is reported to have been unworthy of a great mind. The imperial captive was daily exposed to the insult of the multitude, and the Persian monarch, whenever he mounted on horseback, trampled on the neck of the Roman emperor ; even after his death, his skin stuffed with straw in the likeness of a human figure, was preserved as a monument of Persian triumph.

The captivity of Valerian was received by Gallienus with avowed indifference and secret pleasure. It is not easy to describe the various character of this prince ; he was a ready orator, an

elegant poet, a skilful gardener, an excellent cook, and a most contemptible sovereign. When the reins of government were held by so weak a hand, it is not surprising that a crowd of usurpers should distract the provinces; but the revival of the thirty tyrants of Athens, in the state of Rome, is rather the child of an ingenious fancy, than the offspring of truth; even allowing the contemptible Cyriades, only eighteen more can be produced. Of these, the greatest part were born of peasants, and had risen from private soldiers, by military merit. Tetricus only was a senator; Piso alone was a noble; and the qualities of the meanest might well claim a preference over the effeminate vices of the son of Valerian. On Odenathus indeed, Gallienus allowed the senate to confer the title of Augustus; and the Palmyrenian evinced his gratitude by the most respectful conduct towards the emperor.

But the provinces of Rome were not only doomed to experience the invasions of barbarians, and the usurpations of tyrants; the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus are marked by accumulated calamities. In Sicily, troops of banditti, and a licentious croud of slaves and peasants, reigned over the plundered country, and intercepted the revenue of the capital. In Alexandria, the inhabitants,

bitants, abandoned to the rage of their passions, maintained a civil war within the city; and for twelve successive years, every street was polluted with blood, and every building of strength was converted into a citadel. In Isauria, though the revolt of Trebellianus was fatal to himself, yet his followers, despairing of mercy, not only shook off their allegiance, but returned to their savage manners; and, secured by inaccessible rocks, in the heart of the Roman empire preserved a barbarous independence, and gradually extending their territory to the sea coast, subdued the western and mountainous part of Cilicia.

A long and general famine, the consequence of rapine and oppression, depopulated the provinces and cities of Rome; and a furious plague, which commenced in the year two hundred and fifty, and continued for fifteen years to rage throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire, casts an additional gloom over this period of disgrace and calamity. Nor can we omit a curious circumstance in the calculation of human misery; it was found by an exact register, kept at Alexandria, of all the citizens entitled to share in the distribution of corn, that the claimants, formerly comprised between the ages of forty and seventy, were equal to those in the reign of Gallienus, comprised be-

tween the ages of fourteen and fourscore. By the most correct tables of mortality, according to this account, half the people in Alexandria had perished, and it is probable the other provinces suffered in proportion.

CHAPTER VII.

REIGN OF CLAUDIUS — DEFEAT OF THE GOTHS — VICTORIES, TRIUMPH, AND DEATH OF AURELIAN.

THE general indignation was excited by the calamitous reign of an effeminate tyrant, and a considerable army on the Danube invested Aureolus with the purple, who rapidly A. D. 268. passed the Alps, occupied Milan, and defied Gallienus to the combat. The emperor, at the head of his legions, encountered his aspiring general near the Adda, and the Rhætian usurper, defeated and dangerously wounded, escaped into Milan. The siege of that city was instantly formed, and the impending fate of Aureolus was only protracted by the consequences of conspiracy among the officers of his rival. The death of Gallienus was resolved, and executed at a late hour of the night,

A. D. 268. when without his guards or armour,
March 20. he had hastened to repel a pretended sally from the town. But in his dying moments, Gallienus requested the imperial ornaments might be delivered to Claudius who commanded an army in the neighbourhood of Pavia. The conspirators acquiesced in the choice, and the obedience of the soldiers was secured by a liberal donative.

The origin of Claudius, a native of one of the provinces bordering on the Danube, was obscure, but his merit had attracted the favour of Decius, and by Valerian he was entrusted with the command of the Illyrian frontier. Gallienus, though jealous of his fame, dreaded his indignation, and secured his attachment by splendid presents and grateful attentions. On the death of that prince, he received from the conspirators the bloody purple; but though he might secretly applaud the deed, we may reasonably conclude he was innocent of the knowledge of it.

The elevation of Claudius was followed by the surrender of Milan, and the subsequent execution of Aureolus; but the clemency of the victor was extended to the friends and family of the vanquished, and a severe decree of the senate was mitigated by the intercession of the emperor.

The first labour of Claudius was to revive in his troops a sense of order and obedience; and
after

after painting to them the exhausted state of the empire, and the mischiefs arising from their own lawless caprice, he declared, he intended to point the first effort of their arms against the hostile powers of the rapacious barbarians. Tetricus might reign for a while over the west, and even Zenobia preserve the dominion of the east : these usurpers were his personal enemies ; but he could not think of indulging private resentment, until he had averted the ruin impending over the empire.

The Goths, with the various tribes of Germany and Sarmatia, had already A. D. 269. collected an armament of six thousand vessels, and their united forces are reported to have amounted to three hundred and twenty thousand men. After several descents on the coasts of Europe and Asia, a part steered to the islands of Cyprus and Crete, and the main body landing at the foot of Mount Athos, assaulted the city of Thessalonica. Their attacks were interrupted by the approach of Claudius, and the Goths, impatient for battle, broke up the siege, traversed the hills of Macedonia, and pressed forwards to engage the last defence of Italy. A letter of the emperor, still extant, describes the number of the enemy, the imperfect state of the legions, and complains even of the want of darts, and spears, and shields. But

Claudius, in his own intrepidity and skill, found those resources which the empire could no longer afford. A series of signal victories destroyed this host of barbarians; the decisive battle was fought near Naissus, a city of Dardania. The legions, oppressed by numbers, at first gave way, but a large detachment rising from the secret passes of the mountains, assailed the rear of the enemy. Claudius revived the sinking courage of his troops by his voice and example; and the death of fifty thousand Goths proclaimed his victorious triumph. The several bodies of barbarians who escaped slaughter, diffused the war over the provinces of Mæsia, Thrace, and Macedonia; every advantage was obtained by the superior skill of the emperor, and any loss of the Romans was occasioned by their own cowardice and rashness. A circle of posts distributed with skill, forced the barbarians into the inaccessible parts of mount Hæmus: A rigorous winter, with famine and pestilence, continually diminished the imprisoned multitude; and on the return of spring, the mighty host was reduced to a small, but hardy and desperate band.

The pestilence, which swept away such numbers of the vanquished, proved fatal to the conqueror; and the emperor, after a short and triumphant reign of two years, in which he acquired the glorious

rious denomination of the Gothic Claudius, expired at Sirmium. In his last illness he recommended Aurelian as most deserving of the throne, and best qualified to defend it. The moderation of Quintilius, the brother of Claudius, was not equal to this patriotic disposition; he assumed the purple at Aquileia, and though he reigned but seventeen days, had time to procure the approbation of the senate. On the approach of Aurelian, at the head of the army of the Danube, he opened his veins, and withdrew from the unequal contest.

Aurelian was the son of a peasant of the territory of Sirmium; he enlisted in the troops as a common soldier, and gradually rose by distinguished merit to the important office of commander of the cavalry, and thence was called by Claudius to the imperial dignity. His reign, though it only lasted four years and nine months, was marked by the end of the Gothic war, the chastisement of the Germans, the submission of Tetricus, and the destruction of the monarchy which Zenobia had erected in the east. His severe discipline was the source of his success; his conduct gave a sanction to his laws, and the seditious legions dreaded a chief who had learned to obey, and who was worthy of command.

The spirits of the Goths were revived by the
death

death of Claudius ; their numbers were increased with new swarms of their countrymen, and Aurelian encountered their host in a doubtful and bloody conflict. Their mutual losses inspired the contending parties with the desire of peace ; a permanent treaty was concluded ; the province of Dacia, relinquished to the Goths and Vandals, became an independent state ; and under these more settled barbarians, often proved the firmest barrier of the empire against the invasions of the savages of the north.

While the moderate conduct of Aurelian restored the Illyrian frontier, the Rhætian was invaded by an immense multitude of the Alemanni, who rapidly traced a line of devastation from the Danube to the Po ; the emperor was almost at the same time informed of their ir-
A. D. 270,
September,ruption and retreat. With an active body of troops he skirted the Hercynian Forest, permitted half their force to pass the river without disturbance, and then issued from his post to their terror and astonishment. Disposing his legions in a semicircular form, he advanced the two horns of the crescent across the Danube, and wheeling them on a sudden towards the centre, enclosed the rear of the German host. The Alemanni, surrounded and hopeless, disdained not to negotiate for peace ; but the terms they demanded

manded would scarce have been granted them after a victory ; and Aurelian allowed them no other choice than to submit to his unconditional mercy, or await the utmost severity of his resentment. An unexpected emergency, immediately after this conference, required the emperor's presence in Pannonia. The barbarians, animated by despair, broke through the rear, less vigilantly guarded ; and Aurelian, who considered the war as extinguished, received the mortifying intelligence of the escape of the Alemanni, and their ravages in the territory of Milan.

Aurelian hastily marched with whatever troops he could collect to the relief of Italy. In the first battle, fought near Placentia, the Romans received a severe blow ; the legions were broken, a dreadful slaughter ensued, and the troops were with difficulty at last rallied only by the patient firmness of the emperor. The second action was near Fano, in Umbria, for thus far had the Germans advanced towards Rome ; but Aurelian, watchful for the safety of the capital, found in this place the decisive moment of giving them a total defeat, and the remnant of their host was exterminated in a battle near Pavia. But the recent danger of the mistress of the world suggested the wall begun by Aurelian, and finished by Probus, the extent of which is found to be about twenty-one miles.

Claudius

Claudius and Aurelian had restored to the arms of Rome, their ancient superiority over the barbarians of the north ; to re-unite the dismembered empire was reserved for the second of those warlike emperors. Though acknowledged by the senate and the people, his dominion was confined to Italy, Africa, Illyricum, and Thrace. Gaul, Spain, and Britain, Ægypt, Syria, and Asia Minor defied his authority, and even obeyed the commands of women.

Gaul had displayed a rapid succession of monarchs : the rigid virtue of Posthumus, by refusing to gratify the avarice of his troops, was fatal to his life and power ; the death of Victorinus, his friend and associate, was the consequence of his licentious passions, and he fell a victim to a conspiracy of jealous husbands. After the murder of so many valiant princes, the turbulent legions of Gaul submitted to the control of Victoria, the mother of Victorinus, who placed Tetricus on the throne, and with the titles of Augusta, and Mother of the Camps, ruled under the name of the dependent Emperor.

When Tetricus first assumed the purple, he was the governor of the peaceful province of Aquitaine ; he reigned four or five years over Gaul, Spain, and Britain, the slave of a licentious army, when the fortune of Aurelian first opened to him
a prof-

a prospect of deliverance. In a letter A. D. 271,⁸ to the Roman emperor, he disclosed ^{Summer.} his melancholy situation, and intreated him to hasten to his assistance. Affecting the appearances of a civil war, he led his forces into the field against Aurelian, posted them in a disadvantageous manner, and deserted with a few chosen friends in the beginning of the action. The troops, though betrayed by their chief, defended themselves with obstinacy, and were almost to a man destroyed. The auxiliaries, the Franks, and Batavians were compelled to repass the Rhine, and the power of Aurelian was established in tranquillity from the wall of Antoninus to the columns of Hercules.

Aurelian having secured the person and provinces of Tetricus, turned his arms against Zenobia, the queen of Pal- ^{A. D. 271.}myra and the east. This extraordinary woman claimed her descent from the Macedonian kings of Ægypt; her beauty was only to be equalled by her understanding, her chastity by her valour; she possessed in equal perfection the Greek, the Syriac, and the Ægyptian languages, and had compared the merits of Homer and Plato under the tuition of the sublime Longinus.

Odenathus, who had raised himself from a private station to the dominion of the east, courted and obtained

obtained her hand, and his success was in a great measure ascribed to her prudence. They twice pursued the Persian monarch to the gates of Ctesiphon :

A. D. 250.

but the Palmyrenian prince, invincible in war, fell a victim to domestic treason, and was assassinated in the midst of a great entertainment by his nephew Mæonius, who had scarce time to assume the title of Augustus before he was sacrificed by Zenobia to the memory of her husband.

Zenobia governed Syria and the east with a firm and steady hand. The authority granted to Odenathus by the senate expired with his life ; but his manly widow disdained the feeble approbation, and compelled a general, sent against her by Gallienus, to retreat with disgrace. To the dominions of Odenathus, which extended from the Euphrates to the frontiers of Bithynia, she added the fertile kingdom of Egypt, and with the diadem assumed the splendid and doubtful title of Queen of the East.

The presence of Aurelian restored obedience to

A. D. 272. the province of Bithynia, shaken by the arms and intrigues of Zenobia.

Ancyra submitted, and Tyana was betrayed by a perfidious citizen. Antioch was deserted by her inhabitants at his approach ; but these were soon recalled by the mild edicts of the emperor. In

two great battles, Zenobia was defeated; the first was fought near Antioch, the second near Emesa, and the circumstances of both were so nearly similar as scarce to be distinguished but by the different fields of action. Zenobia in each animated the troops with her presence, but devolved the execution of her orders on Zabdas, who had already signalised his talents by the conquest of Egypt.

After the defeat of Emesa, Zenobia found it impossible to collect a third army. Probus, the bravest of Aurelian's generals, was detached to reduce the Egyptian provinces, and the widow of Odenathus was compelled to retire within the walls of her capital. She prepared for a vigorous defence, and declared the last moment of her reign should be the last of her life. Palmyra, situated amid the barren deserts of Arabia, derives its name from the multitude of adjacent palm trees; the purity of the air, and some valuable springs which watered the soil, first preferred it to notice. The situation between the gulph of Persia and the Mediterranean, rendered it convenient to the caravans; and Palmyra, by the elevation of Odenathus and Zenobia, was exalted into a temporary rival of Rome.

The emperor, who in his march from Emesa to Palmyra had been harrassed by the Arabs, pressed the siege of the latter city with incessant vigour,

at

at the same time that he offered advantageous terms of capitulation. To the queen, a splendid retreat; to the citizens, their ancient privileges. These proposals were rejected, and the refusal was accompanied with insults.

The hopes of Zenobia, that famine would soon compel the emperor to repass the desert, and that the Persian monarch would rush to her support, were defeated by a succession of convoys accompanied by the victorious Probus from the reduction of Ægypt, and by the death of Sapor, and the subsequent distraction of the Persian councils. The fears of Zenobia now prevailed, she determined to fly; and mounted on the swiftest of her dromedaries, had already reached the banks of the Euphrates, when she was overtaken by the light horse, and brought back to the feet of Aurelian. Her capital soon after surrendered, and was treated with unexpected lenity.

The conduct of the widow of Odenathus when captive, diminished her former fame; she implored the mercy of Aurelian, acknowledged the guilt of her resistance, and imputed it to the counsels of Longinus. The unlettered mind of Aurelian was not to be moved by genius or learning, the unhappy minister was doomed to immediate execution; but the fame of Longinus will survive that of the queen who betrayed him, and the emperor who condemned him.

Returning

Returning from the conquest of the east, Aurelian was provoked by the intelligence that the Palmyrenians had revolted and massacred the governor and garrison. He instantly returned towards Syria, and the punishment was as severe as the victory was easy. Old men, women and children were involved in the same destruction, and Palmyra gradually sunk into an obscure town, an insignificant fortress, and a miserable village.

One labour still remained for Aurelian. During the revolt of Palmyra, Firmus, a wealthy merchant of Egypt, had assumed the purple and excited an insurrection at Alexandria. To support his usurpation, he had introduced the Saracens and Blemmyes into the adjoining province. Such feeble enemies could not long withstand the conqueror of Tetricus and Zenobia; and Firmus, after an inconsiderable defence, was taken, tortured, and put to death.

Aurelian in little more than three years had restored peace to the Roman world, and the magnificence of his triumph was adequate to the extent of his conquests. The emperor Tetricus, and the queen of the east, swelled the number of his captives. But if Aurelian indulged his pride in this treatment of his royal prisoners, he afterwards behaved to them with a generous clemency. Zenobia was presented with an

elegant villa at Tivoli, her daughters married into noble families, and her race was not extinct in the fifth century. Tetricus and his son were reinstated in their rank and fortunes, and Aurelian admitted the abdicated monarch to his conversation and friendship.

Aurelian soon was convinced, that to eradicate the crimes and factions of a feeble luxuriant government, was a more arduous task than to vanquish the foreign and domestic foes of the republic. His attempt to restore the purity of the coin, which had been adulterated, was opposed by a formidable insurrection; and he acknowledges, in a private letter, that seven thousand of his best troops were slain in suppressing it. This unprovoked rebellion exasperated the haughty spirit of the conqueror; he suspected the perpetual enmity of the senate, with whom he had ever lived in a state of dissention. Indifferent to forms and civil institutions, the stern Aurelian disdained to hold his power by any other title but that of the sword; and while he offended by his pride the prejudices of the senators, his hasty revenge involved them in the guilt and punishment of the late conspiracy. His talents, as was observed by his successor Diocletian, were better suited to the command of an army, than the government of an empire; and as if sensible of the character in which nature had enabled him to excel, he

he took the field a few months after his triumph. The majesty of Rome had been insulted by the captivity of Valerian, and the emperor, at the head of a large army, had advanced towards Persia, as far as the streights which divide Europe from Asia, when he experienced that no power could screen him from the effects of despair. He had threatened one of his secretaries, accused of extortion; the sole hope of the criminal was to involve some of the principal officers in his fears. He counterfeited in his hand, a long list of persons devoted to death; those to whom he shewed it, without suspicion or enquiry, resolved to secure their lives by the murder of the emperor. On his march between Byzantium and Heraclea he was attacked by the conspirators, and fell by the hand of Mucapor, a general whom he loved and trusted. The people, in his death, lamented a great and fortunate prince, the army regretted a warlike commander, the state lost a useful though severe reformer, but the senate rejoiced in his fall, and detested his memory as their persecutor.

A. D. 274.

October.

A. D. 275.

January.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONDUCT OF THE ARMY AND SENATE AFTER THE
DEATH OF AURELIAN—REIGNS OF TACI-
TUS, PROBUS, CARUS AND HIS SONS.

THE death of Aurelian was remarkable for its extraordinary consequences ; the artifice of his perfidious secretary was discovered and punished, the deluded conspirators avowed their contrition, and the obedient disposition of the legions was signified in the following epistle. “ The brave
“ and fortunate armies, to the senate and people
“ of Rome. The crime of one man, and the
“ error of many have deprived us of the late em-
“ peror Aurelian. May it please you, venerable
“ lords and fathers, to place him in the number of
“ the gods, and to appoint a successor whom your
“ judgment shall declare worthy of the imperial
“ purple ! None of those, whose guilt or misfor-
“ tune has contributed to our loss shall ever
“ reign

“reign over us.” This modest and dutiful address diffused through the senate the most pleasing astonishment; yet the prudent assembly declined committing their dignity to the caprice of an armed multitude; and a decree was dictated, by which the choice of a new emperor was referred to the military order. The troops again A. D. 275.
 conjured the senate to invest one of their Feb. 3.
 own body with the purple, and a period of eight months was consumed in this amicable contention, during which the Roman world remained without a sovereign, without an usurper, and without a sedition.

On the twenty-fifth of September, A. D. 275.
 the consul convoked an assembly, re- Sept. 25.
 ported the doubtful and dangerous situation of the empire, and the necessity of complying with the dutiful request of the army. The unanimous voice of the members, called to the imperial dignity Tacitus, the first of the senators, and the descendant of the celebrated historian. The new emperor, who had attained his seventy-fifth year, in vain pleaded his age and infirmities, as unfit to succeed the martial vigour of Aurelian: his rank, his conduct, his manners confirmed the choice; and the judgment of the senate was ratified by the people and Prætorian guards.

From the senate, Tacitus proceeded to the

A. D. 276. Thracian camp, to obtain the more substantial support of the legions; he gratified their avarice by a liberal donative, and engaged their esteem by a declaration that his counsels should never be unworthy of a Roman general, or the successor of the brave Aurelian.

The deceased emperor, in his preparations for his second eastern expedition, had negotiated with the Alani, a Scythian people in the neighbourhood of the Lake Mæotis, to invade Persia with their numerous cavalry. The death of Aurelian suspended the Persian war; and these barbarians, on their arrival on the Roman frontiers, during the interregnum, found the generals unprepared either to oppose or receive them. The Alani, who considered this treatment as perfidious, had recourse to their own valour for their payment and revenge; they spread themselves over the provinces of Pontus, Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Galatia. The conduct of Tacitus was suitable to his age and station. To those of the Alani who relinquished their booty and captives, he punctually discharged the engagements of Aurelian. Against the remainder, he waged in person a successful war, and delivered in a few weeks the provinces of Asia from the terror of Scythian invasion.

But the life and glory of Tacitus were of short duration; the unaccustomed hardships of a military life

life were aggravated by the cares of the mind. The angry passions of the foldiers raged with redoubled violence; they defpised the mildnefs of his adminiftration, and importuned him with inceffant demands which he was incapable of fatisfying. After a reign of fix months and twenty days he expired in Cappadocia; and the A. D. 276. infolence of the legions was the caufe of April 12. his death, even, if they refrained from imbruing their hands in his blood.

Florianus, the brother of Tacitus, instantly ufurped the purple, without awaiting the approbation of the fenate. Probus, the heroic general of the eaft, declared himfelf the avenger of the infulted authority of that affembly. Though the effeminate troops of Syria appeared unequal to encounter the hardy legions of Europe, yet the activity of Probus triumphed over every obftacle. The veterans of his rival fickened in the fultry heats of Cilicia; and Florianus, after enjoying the imperial title about three months, fell A. D. 276. at Tarfus, a facifice to the contempt of July. his foldiers.

The victorious Probus was, with Claudius and Aurelian, defcended from a race of peafants in Illyricum; like his warlike predeceffors, he had rifen by military merit. Africa and Pontus, the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, and the Nile,

Nile, by turns had witnessed his personal prowess and conduct in war. In the full possession of fame, of the love of the army, and of vigour of body and mind, at the age of forty-four he ascended the imperial throne. His dutiful address to the senate displayed the language of a Roman patriot. "Happy would it have been, if Florianus, instead of usurping the purple of his brother, like a private inheritance, had expected what your majesty might determine, either in his favour or that of any other person. The prudent soldiers have punished his rashness: to me they have offered the title of Augustus; but I submit to your clemency, my pretensions and merit." The senators were unable to disguise their satisfaction at this respectful epistle from Probus, and they ratified, without a dissenting voice, the election of the eastern
 A. D. 276. August 3. armies. The reign of the emperor corresponded with his professions; the senate was permitted to direct the civil administration, and their general often laid at their feet the trophies of his victories; yet he must secretly have despised their weakness in acquiescing under, when it was in their power to repeal, the disgraceful edict of Gallienus, which excluded them from all military employments.

The enemies of Rome revived with increased fury on the death of Aurelian; they were again
 vanquished

vanquished by the vigour of Probus. The frontier of Rhætia was firmly secured, the power of the Sarmatian tribes was broken; the Gothic nation courted the alliance, and the Isaurians in their mountains felt and dreaded the resentment, of the warlike emperor. The cities of Coptos and Ptolemais, persevered in the revolt excited by Firmus, and maintained the alliance of the Blemmyes; the chastisement of those cities, and their savage auxiliaries, alarmed the great king, and Persia sued in vain for the friendship of Probus. Most of the actions which distinguish the reign of this prince, he performed in person, and the remainder he devolved on the tried abilities of Carus, Diocletian, Maximian, Constantius, Galerius, and a crowd of chiefs educated in the severe school of Aurelian.

But the most important service which Probus rendered the empire, was recovering from the barbarians of Germany seventy flourishing cities; and delivering Gaul from the oppression of its invaders. In this labour, we find three great armies vanquished by his valour. He drove back the Franks into their morasses; he defeated the Burgundians, a considerable people of the Vandalic race; and totally overthrew the Lygii in a general engagement: Semno, the most renowned of their chiefs, fell alive into

A. D. 277.

into the hands of the emperor; who, though he permitted a retreat to these people, yet their losses in the battle; and the difficulties they suffered in their return, broke the strength of the nation; nor is the Lygian name ever again mentioned in the history of Germany. But the ambition of Probus was not confined to a defensive war; under his auspices, the Roman eagles passed the Rhine, and appeared on the banks of the Elbe and Necker. Nine of the princes of Germany, astonished at his presence, repaired to his camp, and prostrated themselves at his feet. He exacted the restitution of the effects and captives they had carried away from the provinces, and imposed a considerable tribute of corn, cattle and horses. He even had some thoughts of compelling the Germans to relinquish the exercise of arms, and to depend upon the justice and power of Rome: this design was however deferred, and the empire of Rome was fortified against the inroads of the barbarians, by a stone wall which stretched from Neustadt and Ratisbon on the Danube, as far as Wimpfen on the Necker; and after a winding course of two hundred miles, terminated on the banks of the Rhine. The experience of the world has exposed the vain attempt of fortifying any extensive tract of country; and the wall of Probus, within a few years after his death, was overthrown by the Alemanni.

The

The wisdom of Probus, in the useful conditions of peace imposed on the vanquished Germans, compelled them to supply the Roman armies with sixteen thousand recruits of their most robust youth; these were distributed in small bands of fifty or sixty each, through the national troops. He also replenished the exhausted frontiers with new colonies of captive or fugitive barbarians, on whom he bestowed lands, cattle, and instruments of husbandry; yet the idleness of the barbarians too often disappointed the expectations of the emperor, and their love of freedom provoked them into rebellions, equally fatal to themselves and the provinces.

Even the vigilance and activity of Probus, were not able to retain in obedience every part of his extended dominions. Saturninus, an officer of merit, who commanded in the east, was driven into rebellion by the importunities of his friends, and by his own fears. "Alas!" said he, on his election, "the republic has lost a useful servant, and
" the rashness of an hour has destroyed the ser-
" vices of many years. In thus exalting me to the
" throne, you have doomed me to a life of cares,
" and to an untimely fate; the only consolation
" which remains is, the assurances that I shall not
" fall alone." The former part of the prediction was verified by the victory, but the latter was disappointed

A. D. 279. pointed by the clemency of Probus; and he even endeavoured, though in vain, to save the unhappy usurper from the fury of the soldiers. The rebellion of Bonofus and Pro-

A. D. 280. culus in Gaul, the former celebrated for his prowess in the combats of Bacchus, and the latter in those of Venus, was attended with similar circumstances and with similar clemency; the leaders sunk beneath the superior genius of Probus, but their adherents experienced his mercy.

The emperor had now suppressed the foreign and domestic enemies of the state, and
A. D. 181. on his return to Rome the magnificence of his triumph was suitable to his fortune; yet the desperate courage of about four-score gladiators stained it with blood; Disdaining to devote their lives to the amusement of the populace, they broke from their keepers, and after an obstinate resistance, obtained an honourable death and just revenge.

The discipline which had been introduced into the camp by Aurelian was maintained, though with less cruelty, by Probus; the troops were exercised in covering with rich vineyards the hills of Gaul and Pannonia; and an unhealthy tract of marshy ground near Sirmium, where Probus was born, was converted into tillage by their labour; but

but the emperor in these works did not sufficiently consult the fierce dispositions of the legionaries; and an unguarded expression, that on the establishment of universal peace he might abolish the necessity of a standing army, proved fatal to him. In one of the hottest days of summer, as he severely urged their toil, the soldiers threw down their tools, grasped their arms, and broke out into a furious mutiny. The emperor vainly sought refuge in a lofty tower; the doors were forced, and a thousand swords were plunged in the bosom of the unfortunate prince. The rage of the troops was extinguished with his life; they lamented their rashness, and by an honourable monument they erected, perpetuated the fame of his victories. The elevation of Carus was not marked with the same dutiful respect for the senate as had attended the death of Aurelian: the legions declared this general, who filled the office of Prætorian præfect, worthy the purple; and the new emperor contented himself with announcing to the senate that he had ascended the vacant throne. Carus, though a soldier, had received a learned education; and though a senator, notwithstanding the edict of Gallienus, was invested with the first dignity of the army. He was about sixty years when raised to the government of the Roman world, and his two sons, Carinus and

and Numerian had attained the season of manhood.

The warlike sovereign of Rome prepared immediately, with the consent of the legions, to execute the long suspended design of the Persian war. Before his departure, he conferred on his two sons the title of Cæsar; and directed Carinus, whom he had invested with almost an equal share of the imperial power, to suppress some troubles in Gaul, and fix his residence afterwards at Rome. The safety of Illyricum was confirmed by the defeat and slaughter of sixteen thousand Sarmatians; the old emperor, animated with the victory, pursued his march in the midst of winter through the countries of Thrace and Asia, and arrived with his son Numerian on the confines of the Persian monarchy. Varanes, the successor of Artaxerxes, was alarmed at his approach, and condescended to negotiate for peace. The ambassadors entered
A. D. 283. the camp about sun-set, when the troops were satisfying their hunger with a frugal meal. They were conducted to the emperor by a foldier, and found him seated on the grass in a coarse garment of purple, with his supper, composed of a stale piece of bacon and a few hard pease: Carus in the conference took off a cap which concealed his baldness, and declared, unless their master speedily acknowledged the superiority

periority of Rome, he would render Persia as naked of trees as his own head was destitute of hair. The menaces of Carus were not without effect; he ravaged Mesopotamia, made himself master of the cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, and carried his victorious arms beyond the Tigris. Persia was distracted by domestic factions, part of her forces were detained on the frontiers of India, and Rome hoped to the fall of the Persian monarchy would be added the conquest of Arabia, the submission of Egypt, and the final delivery of the empire from the Scythian nations. But the news of the victories of Carus was scarce announced, before it was followed by his death; but whether the effect of a flash of lightning, or the consequence of a disorder the emperor then laboured under, it is difficult to trace.

A. D. 283.

Dec. 25.

The army immediately acknowledged as emperors young Numerian, and his absent brother Carinus; but the legions were dismayed at the late fate of Carus. Places or persons struck with lightning were considered by the Romans as devoted to the wrath of heaven. An oracle had pronounced the river Tigris, the boundary of the Roman arms; and the troops, instead of pursuing the victories of Carus, called aloud on young Numerian to obey the will of the gods, and lead them from the inauspicious seat of war.

Rome.

Rome and the provinces, as well as the army, congratulated the accession of the sons of Carus; but the vices of Carinus had already excited the

A. D. 284. contempt of the capital : the reputation of personal courage, which he had acquired in the Gallic war, was effaced by his effeminate manners and abandoned disposition. In the course of a few months he successively married and divorced nine wives, and his irregular appetites brought dishonour on himself and on the noblest houses of Rome. He selected his ministers from the dregs of the people; one of his door-keepers was entrusted with the government of the city, and a confidential secretary, famous for his skill in forgery, delivered the indolent emperor from the irksome duty of signing his name. The intelligence of his conduct had filled his father with shame, nor had he concealed his resolution of satisfying the republic by a severe act of justice, and of adopting, instead of a worthless son, the virtuous Constantius, then governor of Dalmatia. But the elevation of Constantius was deferred, and the extravagancies of Carinus were released from control by the unexpected death of Carus.

The uncommon splendour with which Carinus exhibited the Roman games of the theatre, circus and amphitheatre, in his own and his brother's name, form the only merit of his reign; twenty
years

years afterwards, the courtiers of Diocletian acknowledged that the reign of Carinus had indeed been a reign of pleasure. But in the midst of this glittering pageantry, at the distance of A. D. 284. nine hundred miles from Rome, the Sept. 12. brother of Carinus expired, and a sudden revolution transferred the sceptre from the house of Carus into the hands of a stranger.

The temper of Numerian, which differed widely from that of Carinus, would probably have prevented their union from being of any long duration. The former was gentle in his disposition and affable in his manners; he possessed the elegant accomplishments of an orator and a poet; yet his talents were rather of the contemplative than of the active kind; neither the inclinations nor pursuits of Numerian qualified him for the command of armies. His constitution was destroyed by the hardships of the Persian war, and the heat of the climate had considerably impaired his eyes: in the course of the retreat he confined himself to the darkness of a litter; and Arius Aper, whose daughter he had married, and who held the important station of Prætorian præfect, administered all affairs civil and military.

Eight months after the death of Carus, the legions halted at Chalcedon in Asia, while the court passed over to Heraclea, on the European

side of the Propontis. A whisper circulated through the camp, of the emperor's death, and the ambition of his minister: the soldiers, alarmed, broke into the imperial tent, and discovered only the corpse of Numerian. The gradual decline of his health might warrant the supposition of natural death; but the concealment, and the measures which Aper had taken to secure his election, were a presumption of his guilt. A general assembly of the army was held at Chalcædon, whither Aper was transported as a prisoner and criminal. Diocletian, commander of the body guards, was selected by the generals and tribunes as the person most capable of avenging

A. D. 284. and succeeding the deceased emperor.

Sept. 17. He ascended the tribunal, and raising his eyes towards the sun, made a solemn profession of his own innocence; then assuming the language of a sovereign and a judge, he commanded Aper to be brought before him in chains. "This man," said he, "is the murderer of Numerian;" and without allowing time for his justification, he buried his sword in the breast of the unfortunate præfect; the legions, by repeated acclamations, acknowledged the justice and authority of Diocletian.

Carinus yet possessed arms and treasures sufficient to withstand the pretensions of Diocletian to empire;

empire ; but his personal vices proved fatal to his power and life. In the spring, the forces of the east and west encountered each other in the plains of Margus, a small city of Mæsia. The troops lately returned from Persia, their numbers diminished and strength exhausted, were broken by the legions of Europe ; but the sword of a tribune, whose wife Carinus had seduced, extinguished civil discord in the blood of the adulterer, and bestowed the purple on Diocletian in the moment he despaired of life.

 CHAPTER IX.

THE REIGN OF DIOCLETIAN AND HIS THREE ASSOCI-
 ATES, MAXIMIAN, GALERIUS, AND CONSTAN-
 TIUS—THE PERSIAN WAR—ABDICATION
 AND RETIREMENT OF DIOCLETIAN
 AND MAXIMIAN.

THE birth of Diocletian was more obscure than that of any of his predecessors; his parents had
 A. D. 285. been slaves in the house of Anulinus, a senator, and the name he was distinguished by he derived from a small town of Dalmatia. Favourable oracles, and an ambitious disposition, prompted him to pursue the profession of arms; he was successively promoted to the government of Mæsia, the honours of the consulship, and the command of the guards of the palace; and by the judgment of his rivals, after the death of Numerian, was declared the most worthy of the imperial throne. The abilities of Diocletian were rather useful than splendid; dexterity and application in business; a judicious mixture of
 liberality

liberality and œconomy, of rigour and mildness; profound dissimulation with the appearance of frankness; and above all, the great art of submitting his own passions, as well as those of others, to the advancement of his interest. Of former emperors, he seems most to have resembled Augustus; but on his election, he declared he was chiefly desirous of imitating the humane philosophy of Marcus Antoninus.

After the example of Marcus, he gave himself a colleague in the person of Maximian, on whom he bestowed at first the title of Cæ- A. D. 286.
sar, and afterwards that of Augustus. April 1st.

Maximian was born a peasant, and like Aurelian, in the territory of Sirmium. Unacquainted with science, and ignorant of letters, war was the only art he professed; he had distinguished himself on every frontier of the empire, and though, perhaps, he never attained the skill of a consummate general, valour, constancy, and experience rendered him capable of executing the most arduous plan of his associate; to whom his vices were scarce less useful than his virtues. Insensible to pity, he was the ready instrument of every act of cruelty which the policy of that artful prince might at once suggest and disclaim; but the difference of characters did not interrupt the friendship of the two emperors, who either from pride or supersti-

tion assumed the titles, the one of Jovius, the other of Herculus. The prudence of Diocletian discovered that the empire, assailed on every side, required on every side the presence of an emperor; he resolved again to divide his power, and with the inferior title of Cæsar, to confer on two generals of approved merit an equal share of the sovereign authority. A. D. 292. March 1st. Galerius and Constantius were the two persons invested with the second honours of the imperial purple. The manners, country and extraction of Galerius were the same as those of Maximian: the birth of Constantius excelled that of his colleagues; his father was a considerable noble of Dardania, and his mother a niece of the emperor Claudius. A youth spent in arms, had not changed a disposition naturally mild and amiable. To strengthen the bonds of this union, each of the emperors assumed the character of a father to one of the Cæsars; Diocletian to Galerius, Maximian to Constantius; and each, obliging them to repudiate their former wives, bestowed his daughter in marriage on his adopted son. The defence of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, was entrusted to Constantius; the banks of the Danube to Galerius; Italy and Africa to Maximian; and Thrace, Egypt, and the rich countries of Asia were reserved to Diocletian. Each was sovereign within his own

own jurisdiction, and their united authority extended over the whole monarchy.

This important measure was not executed till about six years after the association of Maximian, whose first exploit was suppressing the peasants who, under the appellation of

A. D 287.

Bagandæ, had risen in a general insurrection. During the long series of troubles which agitated Gaul, from the reign of Gallienus to that of Diocletian, the condition of these peasants had been peculiarly miserable; oppressed at once by their masters, the barbarians, the soldiers, and the officers of the revenue. Their patience was at last provoked into despair; on every side they rose in multitudes, and with irresistible fury. The Gallic nobles took refuge from their revenge in fortified cities, or fled from the wild scene of anarchy. But the power of the peasants expired at the approach of the legions; those found in arms were severely punished, the rest retired to their respective habitations, and submitted to their accustomed lives of labour and servitude.

A party of the Franks in the reign of Probus, had been established on the sea coast of Pontus; these seized a fleet stationed in one of the harbours of the Euxine, traversed the ocean, and plundered the defenceless shores of Asia, Greece, and Africa. Their countrymen had followed

their example, and the provinces adjacent to the ocean had ever since been ravaged by their predatory descents. To prevent these, Carausius, a Menapian of skill and valour, had been stationed with a squadron at Boulogne in the streights of the British Channel. This avaricious officer connived at the passage of the pirates, but diligently intercepted their return, and divided the spoil. Maximian, to whom his wealth was an evidence of guilt, had given orders for his death; but the crafty Menapian foresaw the storm; he attached by his liberality, the fleet to his fortunes, and sailing over to Britain, corrupted the legion and auxiliaries which guarded the island, and boldly assumed the imperial purple with the title of Augustus. During seven years he supported his rebellion with courage and ability; his fleets rode triumphant in the channel, ravaged the coasts of the ocean, and Britain, under his command, first assumed its natural and respectable station of a maritime power.

This event immediately followed the chastisement of the peasants in Gaul; and Carausius, by carrying off the fleet at Boulogne, had deprived Maximian of the means of revenge: a new armament was prepared with difficulty, and defeated by the usurper. Diocletian and Maximian, discouraged by this event, resigned to Carausius the sovereignty

sovereignty of Britain. But the adoption of the Cæsars restored new vigour, and Constantius assumed the conduct of the British war; across the entrance of the harbour of Boulogne he raised a stupendous mole, and that city, after an obstinate defence with part of the fleet of Carausius, was compelled to surrender. Before the naval preparations of Constantius, which had employed three years, were completed, he received the intelligence of the usurper's death; Carausius was murdered by his first minister Allectus, who succeeded to his power, and beheld with terror the opposite shores of the continent filled with troops and transports. Constantius had separated his forces, that he might divide the attention and resistance of the enemy; the principal squadron, under the command of the præfect Asclepiodatus, escaped the fleet of Allectus in a thick fog, and landed in safety on the western coast. The usurper, posted near London, hastened to repel his approaching enemy; and after a long and disorderly march, with a small body of harrassed and disheartened troops, encountered the præfect. The engagement was terminated by the defeat and death of Allectus; the rest of the island submitted; and Constantius, when he landed on the shores of Kent, found them covered with obedient subjects.

A. D. 289.

A. D. 292.

A. D. 294.

A. D. 296.

Britain,

Britain, encircled by the sea, had none but domestic enemies to dread; the feeble enterprises of the naked savages of Scotland could scarce affect the province: the peace of the continent, and the defence of the frontiers, required greater exertions of policy and power. The dissentions of the barbarians were encouraged by the arts of Diocletian; the fortifications of the Roman lines were strengthened and restored. In the east, a line of camps was formed from Egypt to the Persian dominions; arsenals were established at Antioch, Emesa, and Damascus. In the north, the ancient towns and citadels were repaired, new ones constructed, and the strictest vigilance introduced among the garrisons. So respectable a frontier was seldom violated, and the subjects of Diocletian beheld with pleasure the Goths, the Vandals, the Gepidæ, and Alemanni waste each others strength in destructive hostilities. Whenever these barbarians, suspending their domestic animosities, evaded the vigilance of the garrisons, the emperors devolved their chastisement on the valour of the Cæsars, and reserved their own persons for occasions worthy their interposition. Gaul was delivered by Constantius, in two victories at Langres and Vindenisfa, from a furious invasion of the Alemanni; yet that prince, in traversing the open country with a feeble guard, was attacked on a sudden

sudden by a hostile multitude ; and escaped with difficulty, and wounded, into Langres. The Roman troops hastened to his relief, and before evening he had satisfied his honour and revenge by the slaughter of six thousand Alemanni.

Diocletian imitated the emperor Probus in the disposal of the vanquished barbarians ; they were distributed among the provinces depopulated by war, encouraged to works of agriculture, and prohibited the exercise of arms. A settlement was granted to several colonies of the Carpi, the Bastarnæ, and the Sarmatians ; by a dangerous indulgence, they were permitted in some measure to retain their national manners and independence, and a multitude of secret enemies were imperceptibly introduced into the heart of the empire.

While the Cæsars defended the Danube and Rhine, the emperors were employed on the southern confines of the Roman empire. A confederacy of five Moorish nations had invaded the peaceful provinces ; Julian had assumed the purple at Carthage, Achilleus at Alexandria, and even the Blemmyes renewed their ravages in Egypt. The success of Maximian seems to have been rapid and decisive, though scarce any circumstances are preserved of his exploits. Diocletian, on his side, opened the campaign in Egypt with Alexandria, which, after a siege of eight months, implored his clemency, and experi-

A. D. 296.

enced

enced his severity: Busiris and Coptos were utterly destroyed by the order of the inflexible emperor; and his policy removed the Nobelæ from their ancient habitations in Lybia, and resigned to them the territory above Syene, and the cataracts of the Nile, to oppose a suitable enemy to the Blemmyes. In Diocletian's chastisement of the Egyptians, we cannot but record one singular circumstance; he caused a diligent inquiry to be made after all the ancient books which treated of the admirable art of making gold and silver, and without pity committed them to the flames. Though these treatises have been ascribed to Pythagoras, Solomon, or Hermes, yet the commendable persecution of Diocletian is the first authentic event in the history of alchymy.

The reduction of Egypt was immediately followed by the Persian war. When Armenia was subdued, in the reign of Valerian, by the perfidy and arms of the Persians, after the assassination of Chosroes, his son Tiridates was saved by his friends, and educated under the protection of the emperors: he signalized his youth by deeds of valour and dexterity, and protected by his single arm the person of Licinius, exposed to imminent danger in the sedition which proved fatal to Probus. Licinius was, in every station, the friend and companion of Galerius; and the merit of Galerius, long

long before he was raised to the dignity of Cæsar, was known and esteemed by Diocletian. In the third year of that emperor's reign, Tiridates was invested with the kingdom of Armenia : his appearance on the frontier of his hereditary dominions was attended with un-

A. D. 286.

feigned transport and joy, and the people, exasperated by multiplied injuries, armed with zeal in the cause of their independence, their religion, and their sovereign. The nobles of Armenia flew to the standard of Tiridates, and the command of the army was bestowed on Artavasdes, whose father had saved the infant life of the prince, and whose family had been massacred for that generous action. For a while, fortune favoured the enterprising valour of the Armenian monarch ; his conquests were not confined to his native territory, but he carried his arms into the heart of Assyria. To the divided state of Persia, Tiridates in part was indebted for these advantages ; Hormuz had for some time disputed the throne with his brother Narses : the civil war was at last terminated, and Narses, universally acknowledged as king of Persia, directed his arms against the foreign invader. Tiridates, a second time expelled from Armenia, again found refuge in the court of the emperors.

Diocletian determined to exert in his support the whole force of the empire ; he fixed his own station in the city of An-

A. D. 296.

tioch,

tioch, and intrusted with the conduct of the legions, the intrepid valour of Galerius. The armies soon encountered in the plains of Mesopotamia; two battles were fought with doubtful success; but in the third, the Roman army received a total overthrow, on the same ground rendered memorable by the defeat of Crassus. We are ignorant of the circumstances of the Roman general's escape; but Tiridates, after an ineffectual display of valour, was pursued to the banks of the Euphrates: his horse was wounded, and the intrepid prince was compelled to dismount and plunge into the stream; his armour was heavy, and the river, deep and rapid, in those parts at least half a mile in breadth; yet such was his strength and dexterity, that he reached in safety the opposite bank.

Diocletian received Galerius not as a colleague, but with the indignation of an offended sovereign: the haughty prince was compelled to follow above a mile on foot the chariot of the emperor; but Diocletian, as soon as he had indulged his resentment, permitted the Cæsar to retrieve

A. D. 297. his own honour, as well as that of the

Roman arms. A second army was drawn from the veterans of the Illyrian frontier, and Galerius, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, advanced through the mountains of Armenia, a country favourable to the operations of infantry,

fantry, and inconvenient for the motions of cavalry. The Persians, elated with success, neglected their discipline; and when they least expected, were surprised by Galerius: his impetuous attack, spread disorder and dismay over the camp of the barbarians, a dreadful carnage ensued, and Narses wounded, fled towards the deserts of Media. Several of his wives and children, who attended the army, were made captives; these were however, protected from violence and rapine, and Galerius, on this occasion, imitated the conduct of Alexander towards the family of Darius.

Diocletian, while he expected the decision of this great contest, had assembled in Syria a strong army of observation, and on the intelligence of the victory, advanced in person to moderate by his counsels the pride of Galerius. The power of Narses had been broken by his last defeat, and he dispatched his faithful servant Apharban, to receive whatever conditions the conqueror should impose. The ambition of Galerius might grasp at the conquest of the east; but the prudence of Diocletian adhered to the moderate policy of Augustus and the Antonines: the emperors soon appointed their secretary Sicorius Probus, to inform Narses on what terms he might hope for a lasting peace. The friendship of Rome was purchased by the cession of five provinces beyond
the

the Tigris; four were indeed of obscure fame and inconsiderable extent, Intiline, Zabdicene, Arzanene, and Moxœne; but the fifth contained the large and mountainous territory of Carduene, the ancient seat of the Carduchians. Mesopotamia, the object of so many wars, was also relinquished; Tiridates was restored to the throne of his ancestors, and the limits of Armenia were extended as far as Sintha in Media: the nomination of the kings of Iberia was also resigned by the Persian monarch to the emperors. Though the inhabitants of the country were savage and rude, yet the narrow defiles of mount Caucasus were in their hands, and it was in their choice, either to admit or exclude the wandering tribes of Sarmatia.

The arduous task of rescuing the distressed empire had now been completely atchieved by a succession of Illyrian peasants; and Diocletian, in the 20th year of his reign, prepared to celebrate his suc-

A. D. 303. cess by the pomp of a Roman triumph.

Nov. 20. Though the two Cæsars had fought and conquered, their exploits were ascribed to the influence of the emperors; and Maximia was the only partner of Diocletian in the glory of the day: for this, Africa and Britain, the Rhine, the Danube and the Nile, furnished their respective trophies; but the most distinguished ornament was a Persian victory, followed by an important conquest. This triumph

triumph is more remarkable with posterity, as the last Rome ever beheld: the emperors soon after ceased to conquer, and a new capital soon obscured the majesty and grandeur of Rome.

Diocletian and Maximian were the first princes who fixed in time of peace their ordinary residence in the provinces. The court of the emperor of the west was established at Milan, a situation most convenient for watching the motions of the barbarians of Germany; and Diocletian honoured by his presence, and ornamented with his wealth, Nicomedia, a city placed on the verge of Europe and Asia, at an equal distance between the Danube and the Euphrates. The emperors, whenever public business allowed them, seem to have retired with pleasure to their favourite residence of Nicomedia and Milan; and till Diocletian celebrated his triumph, it does not appear that he ever had visited the ancient capital of the empire: even on that memorable occasion, his stay did not exceed two months; and he quitted Rome with precipitation, disgusted with the licentious familiarity of the people.

The ambitious hopes entertained by the Roman senate, on the elevation of Tacitus, were extinguished by the policy of Diocletian, and the severity of Maximian. The most illustrious members of the assembly were involved by the latter

in the accusation of imaginary plots, and the wealth of the accused was considered as sufficient evidence of their guilt. The Prætorian troops, who, conscious of their declining power, were disposed to unite with the senate, were insensibly reduced, and their place supplied by two faithful legions from Illyricum, under the new titles of Jovians and Herculians. But the most fatal wound to the senate, was the absence of the emperors; these, at a distance from the capital, laid aside the moderation recommended by Augustus; and exercised in the most unqualified manner, the whole of the legislative as well as executive power.

The princes of Rome, when they had lost sight of the senate and capital, forgot also the origin of their authority; they disdained the civil offices of consul, of pro-consul, of censor, and of tribune; and if they were still distinguished by the appellation of emperor or imperator, it no longer denoted the general of the armies, but the sovereign of the Roman world. Dominus or Lord, as an epithet, had been rejected by the first Cæsars, as implying too despotic a power; but the style of our *Lord and Emperor* was at length universally adopted by flattery, and regularly admitted into the laws and public memorials. The title of king was soon employed by the servile provincials of the east, and the omission of it in those provinces

which

which used the Latin tongue, arose from its being considered as inadequate to the imperial dignity. Former princes had been saluted only with the same respect as magistrates and senators; their principal distinction was the imperial robe of purple, whilst the senatorial garment was marked by a broad, and the equestrian by a narrow band of the same colour. The policy of Diocletian induced him to assume the diadem; it was a broad white fillet, set with pearls, which encircled the emperor's head; his robes, and those of his successors, were of silk and gold. Access to their person was every day rendered more difficult; and when the subject was at last admitted into the imperial presence, he was obliged to fall prostrate, and adore his lord and master, according to the eastern fashion. Such were the means by which Diocletian endeavoured to impress on the minds of his subjects the habits of submission, and the sentiments of veneration.

Convinced that the abilities of a single man were inadequate to the defence of the empire, Diocletian associated three colleagues in the exercise of the supreme power; and it was his intention that the same joint administration should be ever afterwards preserved. The two elder princes were to be distinguished by the title of Augusti; and these were to select for their support two, who

were to be honoured with the rank of Cæsar ; and the latter were, in turn, to rise to the station and attain the privileges of the former : but the system of Diocletian introduced a principle of division, which, in a few years, occasioned the perpetual separation of the eastern and western world. Another immediate disadvantage was the increase of taxes, which accompanied a more expensive establishment ; three or four magnificent courts were established in the various parts of the empire, each contended with the other for the vain superiority of pomp and luxury, and the public impositions, particularly the land-tax and capitation, oppressed and exhausted the devoted provinces.

Diocletian left Italy soon after the ceremony of his triumph, and began his progress towards the east ; from the fatigue of his journey, and the inclemency of the weather, he contracted a slow illness, and his disorder, before he arrived at Nicomedia, was become serious and alarming. During the whole winter, he was confined to his palace, and his death was for some time universally believed. On the first of March, however, Diocletian once more appeared in public, but so emaciated that he could scarcely have been recognised by those to whom his person was most familiar. His health required indulgence and relaxation ; he resolved to pass the remainder

remainder of his days in honourable repose, and to relinquish the theatre of the world to his younger and more active associates.

The ceremony of his abdication was performed in a spacious plain near Nicomedia. From a lofty throne, he declared his intention to the people and soldiers, and divesting himself of the purple, proceeded without delay to a retirement A. D. 305, May 1st. he had chosen in his native country of

Dalmatia. On the same day, Maximian resigned, with less sincerity, the imperial purple at Milan, and retired to a villa in Lucania. The turbulent spirit of the latter, yielded reluctantly to the ascendant which his colleague had acquired; who in the midst of Roman triumph, had meditated his abdication, and exacted an oath from Maximian to follow his example.

Diocletian passed the nine last years of his life at Salona, a city of Dalmatia; his leisure hours were employed in building, planting and gardening: his answer to Maximian is deservedly celebrated. When urged by that restless old man to re-assume the reins of government, he observed, if he could shew Maximian the cabbages planted by his own hands at Salona, he should no longer be importuned to relinquish the enjoyment of happiness for the pursuit of power. But the Roman emperor had filled too important a character in

the world, to enjoy in uninterrupted tranquillity the comforts of retirement. It was impossible for him to remain ignorant of the various troubles which afflicted the empire; it was equally improbable he should remain indifferent to them. His tenderness must have been wounded by the treatment of his wife and daughter; and Constantine and Licinius might well have spared some affronts, with which they embittered the last moments of the father of so many emperors, and the first author of their own fortune. An obscure report has reached our times, that he
A. D. 313. even with-drew himself from their ingratitude by a voluntary death.

CHAPTER X.

DEATH OF CONSTANTIUS — ELEVATION OF CONSTANTINE AND MAXENTIUS. — SIX EMPERORS AT THE SAME TIME — DEATH OF MAXIMIAN AND GALERIUS — VICTORIES OF CONSTANTINE OVER MAXENTIUS AND LICINIUS. — RE-UNION OF THE EMPIRE — PROGRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THE abdication of Diocletian and Maximian was succeeded by eighteen years of discord and confusion. The empire was afflicted by five civil wars; and any interval of rest might be considered less a state of tranquillity than a suspension of hostility. Constantius and Galerius assumed the title of Augustus, as soon as Diocletian and Maximian had resigned the purple. Gaul, Spain, and Britain still experienced the happiness resulting from the mild administration of Constantius; but to Galerius, it was reserved to nominate the two new Cæsars, and complete the system of imperial government.

vernment. The mind of this prince, naturally haughty, was elated by his fame in arms, and his success in the Persian war; and though Maximian and Constantius each had a son arrived at the age of manhood, yet Galerius, promoted to the rank of Cæsar, two persons better qualified to serve his ambitious views. The first of these was Daza, afterwards called Maximin, whose mother was the sister of Galerius; his language and manners still betrayed his rustic education, when he was intrusted with the sovereign command of Ægypt and Syria. The other was Severus, an officer of merit, though addicted to pleasure, who received from the reluctant Maximian, the possession of Italy and Africa. The last apparently acknowledged the supremacy of Constantius, but was devoted to the commands of his benefactor Galerius; who reserving to himself the intermediate countries from the confines of Italy to those of Syria, established his power over three-fourths of the monarchy, in full confidence, that the approaching death of Constantius, would leave him sole master of the Roman world. In less than eighteen months, the ambitious schemes of Galerius were overturned by two unexpected revolutions. Constantine possessed himself of the western provinces, and the revolt of Maxentius was attended with the loss of Africa and Italy.

Helena,

Helena, the daughter of an innkeeper, was the obscure mother of Constantine, and the place of his birth Naïffus, in Dacia. A. D. 274.

He was about eighteen years of age when his father was advanced to the rank of Cæsar, A. D. 292. but that fortunate event was attended

with his mother's divorce; and the splendor of an imperial alliance reduced the son of Helena to a state of despair and humiliation. Instead of following his father, he remained in the service of Diocletian, and after signalizing his valour in the wars of Ægypt and Persia, rose to the station of tribune of the first order. His figure was tall and majestic, he was dexterous in all his exercises, and, susceptible of ambition, was insensible to the allurements of pleasure. The favour of the soldiers, which already named him as worthy the rank of Cæsar, exasperated the jealousy of Galerius; every hour increased the danger of Constantine and the anxiety of his father; who, by repeated letters, expressed the warmest desire of embracing his son. Permission for the journey, after successive excuses, was reluctantly granted by Galerius; and Constantine leaving the palace of Nicomedia in the night, traversed Bithynia, Thrace, Dacia, Pannonia, Italy, and Gaul, with an expedition which baffled all hopes from pursuit.

He

He reached the port of Boulogne, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, in the moment his father was preparing to embark for Britain.

Constantius, after obtaining an easy victory over the barbarians of Caledonia, ended his life at A. D. 306, York, fifteen months from his attaining the title of Augustus, and fourteen years and a half from his being called to the rank of Cæsar. The flower of the western armies had followed Constantius into Britain, and the legions impatiently hastened to salute his son with the names of Augustus and Emperor. The obstinate resistance which Constantine affected, was contrived to justify his usurpation. In his letter to the emperor of the east, he informs him of the melancholy event of his father's death; modestly asserts his claim to the succession, and laments that the affectionate violence of his troops allowed him not to solicit the imperial purple in the regular manner. The first emotions of Galerius were those of rage and disappointment; but when he considered the character of his adversary, and the doubtful event of war, he prudently embraced the opening left by Constantine; he acknowledged the son of his late colleague, as sovereign of the provinces beyond the Alps, but bestowed on him only the title of Cæsar, and conferred that of Augustus on Severus.

The

The children of Constantius, by his second marriage, were six in number, and might have claimed a preference over the son of Helena; but Constantine was in the thirty-second year of his age, in full vigour both of body and mind, and his claim of superior merit had been allowed and ratified by the dying emperor. The children of Theodora ever experienced the fraternal affection of Constantine, and submitted, without repining, to the superiority of his genius and fortune.

Galerius was scarcely reconciled to the disappointment of his views on the Gallic provinces, when his pride was wounded by the unexpected loss of Italy. The long absence of the emperors had filled Rome with discontent and indignation. The avarice of Galerius, or the exigencies of the state, had prompted him to make a very minute inquisition into the property of his subjects; the privileges which exalted Italy above the rank of the provinces were no longer regarded, and after an exemption of five hundred years, the Roman people were commanded to submit to personal taxation. The feeble remains of the Prætorian guards encouraged the rising fury of the populace, and they declared their readiness to draw their swords in defence of their oppressed countrymen; the influence of the senate was privately added; and it was concluded to confer the title of Roman emperor

emperor on another prince, who should make Rome his place of residence.

The situation, birth, and alliance of Maxentius determined in his favour the popular enthusiasm. With the fairest prospects of succeeding to empire, the son of the emperor Maximian, and married to the daughter of Galerius, he was left to enjoy the luxury of a private fortune in a villa a few miles distant from the capital. The gloomy passions of his soul were inflamed by the news of Constantine's success, and he was easily persuaded A. D. 306,
20th Oct. to unite his personal injury with the cause of the Roman people. As soon as the standard of rebellion was erected at Rome, Maximian broke from his retirement, and concealed his returning ambition under the mask of paternal tenderness. At the request of his son, he re-assumed the purple, and his former reputation added strength to the party of Maxentius.

The emperor Severus, by the advice of his colleague, hastened to Rome, but he found the gates shut against him; an experienced general at the head of a hostile army; his own troops without spirit or affection; and deserted by a large body of his forces, he fled with precipitation to Ravenna, and was soon besieged by Maximian. The strength of Ravenna would have mocked the fruitless efforts of the besiegers; but the arts of his
adversary

adversary persuaded Severus to doubt the fidelity of the garrison, and, under the faith of a capitulation, to trust the discretion of his conqueror. He was conducted a captive of Rome, and all he could obtain, in exchange for the most solemn assurances of life and honourable treatment, was permission to choose his own death. He preferred the favourite mode of the ancients, by opening his veins, and his body was conveyed to the sepulchre constructed for the family of Gallienus.

Maximian, notwithstanding the superiority of his age and dignity, passed the Alps, A. D. 307. courted a personal interview with Con- March 31. stantine, and bestowed on him his daughter Fausta in marriage. The ancient colleague of Diocletian asserted his claim to the western empire, and conferred on his son-in-law the title of Augustus: by receiving this honour, Constantine seemed to embrace the cause of Rome and the senate; but his professions were ambiguous, and his assistance ineffectual.

Galerius, at the head of a powerful army collected from Illyricum and the east, entered Italy, resolved to revenge the death of Severus, and to chastise the rebellious Romans. Though he forced his way as far as Narni, within sixty miles of the capital, yet he found the extent of his camp comprised

comprised his dominion in Italy. The difficulties of the enterprise daily encreased, and the haughty prince was reduced to make the first advances towards a reconciliation: his offers were rejected, and the fidelity of the Illyrian legions began to be shaken by the name of Maximian, and the popular arts of his son. Galerius found it necessary to give the signal of retreat, and his troops, in their return, abandoned themselves to every species of military licence. Though Maxentius hung on their rear during the whole march, yet he ventured not to oppose the fury of these desperate veterans; and Maximian had undertaken a second journey into Gaul, in hopes of persuading Constantine to join in the pursuit: but that prince, deaf to his arguments, persevered in his resolution of maintaining a balance of power in the divided empire.

The return of Galerius was attended with the
 A. D. 307. exaltation of Licinius; the former had
 Nov. 11. considered the rank of Cæsar as inadequate to the age and merit of the latter, and he now invested him with the vacant purple of Severus, and resigned to his immediate command the provinces of Illyricum. Maximin, who oppressed rather than governed the countries of Egypt and Syria, insisted, notwithstanding the intreaties of Galerius, on the equal title of Augustus,

tus. The Roman world was administered by six emperors; Maximian A. D. 308. in the west, was in appearance revered by Constantine and Maxentius; and Galerius in the east, was honoured by Licinius and Maximian. Yet in these opposite interests, a temporary or partial tranquillity was preserved, till the deaths of Maximian and Galerius once more gave a loose to the passions of their surviving associates.

The dispositions of Maximian and his son allowed them not long to possess in harmony an undivided power. Maxentius considered himself as the sovereign of Italy; and Maximian asserted, the rash boy had been established by *his* name and counsels. The cause was pleaded before the Prætorian guards, who dreading the severity of the old emperor, decided in favour of Maxentius. From Rome, Maximian retired to Illyricum, affecting to lament his past conduct; but Galerius, well acquainted with his character, compelled him to leave his dominions. He was however, received with respect at the court of Constantine, but the near prospect of a throne brought to his remembrance his former situation; he was determined to reign or perish. An incursion of the Franks had summoned Constantine to the banks of the Rhine. Maximian invented or hastily credited a report of his death; he seized a considerable treasure

treasure deposited at Arles, and with a lavish hand scattered it among the soldiers. The rapid return of Constantine with a military force superior to resistance, compelled Maximian to take refuge in Marseilles; that city was immediately invested, scaling ladders were applied, and the garrison averted their impending danger by opening the gates and delivering up the person of Maximian. A secret sentence of death was pronounced against the usurper; and it was published to the world, that, oppressed by the remorse of repeated crimes, he had strangled himself with his own hands.

A. D. 310.
February.

The end of Galerius was less calamitous than that of Maximian. After his retreat from Italy, he employed the four remaining years of his life in the execution of works of public utility. A long course of intemperance had swelled his body to an unwieldy corpulence, and he was infested by swarms of those insects which have given their name to a most loathsome disease. He expired at Nicomedia, nineteen years from his being raised

A. D. 311.
May.

ed to the rank of Cæsar, and six after he had attained the superior dignity of Augustus.

His death was followed by the hostile preparations of the two princes whom he had invested with the purple; they were however prevailed on, instead

stead of disputing, to divide his dominions. The provinces of Asia fell to the share of Maximin, and those of Europe were allotted to Licinius. The Hellespont and the Thracian Bosphorus formed their mutual boundary, and the banks of those narrow seas were defended by numerous legions and extensive fortifications. Licinius and Constantine soon united from motives of interest; and Maximin and Maxentius entered into, and concluded a secret treaty. Their devoted subjects in silent anxiety awaited the impending calamities of civil war.

The administration of Constantine A. D. 306,
in Gaul, was distinguished by a signal ^{312.}
victory over the Franks and Alemanni, and by his liberality in remitting the arrears of tribute to the city of Autun; at the same time he reduced the proportion of their assessment from twenty-five to eighteen thousand heads, subject to the capitation; and his humanity seems equally to have contributed to the relief of his subjects, as his valour was successfully exerted in defending them from the attacks of their enemies.

The virtues of Constantine were contrasted with the vices of Maxentius. Italy and Africa groaned under the dominion of a cruel, rapacious, and profligate tyrant. A slight insurrection in the latter province furnished him with a pretence to oppress and ravage the whole extent of the
VOL. I. P country.

country. The governor and a few adherents had only been guilty, but the innocent suffered for their crime, and confiscation of property was considered as an instance of the emperor's clemency. The wealth of Rome was dissipated by his vain prodigality, and the method of exacting a free gift from the senators was first introduced under his reign. Though the support of the senate had enabled him to ascend the throne, yet he regarded that assembly with implacable aversion; the lives of the members were sacrificed to his jealous suspicions, and their wives and daughters were the victims of his sensual passions. Sophronia, a christian, and wife to the præfect of the city, withdrew herself from his brutal violence by a voluntary death. Rome, which so long had regretted the absence, for six melancholy years lamented the presence, of her sovereign.

After the death of Maximian, his statues were thrown down, and his titles erased. His son Maxentius, who had persecuted him while living, affected to avenge him when dead. By his orders, the statues of Constantine in Italy and Africa experienced a similar treatment. The remonstrances of that prince were treated with neglect, and Maxentius avowed his pretensions to the whole monarchy of the west. A considerable force was prepared to invade the Gallic provinces
on

on the side of Rhætia, and every endeavour was used to corrupt, by presents and promises, the legions of Illyricum, and the subjects of Licinius.

Constantine had deliberated with caution, he now prepared to act with vigour; he resolved to prevent the enemy, and carry the war
A. D. 315.
into the heart of Italy. The enter-

prise was full of danger; two former invasions had proved unsuccessful: the veteran troops revered the memory of Maximian; the Prætorian guards were attached to Maxentius, who had increased their number to their ancient establishment. These, with the rest of the Italians, composed a body of fourscore thousand men; the addition of forty thousand Moors and Carthaginians, with the proportion of troops from Sicily, swelled the armies of Maxentius to one hundred and seventy thousand foot, and eighteen thousand horse. The whole force of Constantine exceeded not ninety thousand foot, and eight thousand horse; the defence of the Rhine, during his absence, required above half his establishment. At the head of forty thousand soldiers the intrepid emperor passed the Cottian Alps, and descended with unexpected celerity into the plains of Piedmont. The city of Susa was stormed by the impatience of his followers; and a numerous army of Italians assembled in the plains of Turin, was defeated by the mili-

tary skill and artful evolutions of Constantine. Turin purchased the protection of the conqueror by shutting her gates, and exposing to slaughter the vanquished; few of whom escaped the merciless swords of their pursuers. The victor entered in triumph the imperial palace of Milan, and almost all the cities between the Alps and the Po embraced the party of Constantine.

The Æmilian and Flaminian highways offered an easy march of about four hundred miles from Milan to Rome: but the prudence of Constantine, however impatient to encounter the tyrant, directed his operations against another Italian army. Ruricius Pompeianus, a general of valour and ability, commanded Verona, and the troops stationed in the province of Venetia. A large body of cavalry which he had detached to oppose the emperor of Gaul, was defeated in an engagement near Brescia, and pursued to the gates of Verona; after surmounting the natural obstacles of its situation, the siege of Verona was formed, the city was encompassed with strong lines, and the attacks pushed forward with prudent vigour. When he had exerted every means of defence, Pompeianus, anxious for the public safety, escaped from the devoted walls: with indefatigable diligence, he collected a second army; Constantine, informed of his intention of attacking him in his lines,

lines, left a part of his legions to continue the operations of the siege; and at the head of a chosen body of troops, advanced to meet the general of Maxentius. The engagement began towards the close of day, and was maintained with great obstinacy during the night: the dawn revealed the victory of Constantine, and the death of Pompeianus; Verona instantly surrendered, and Constantine pressing forwards with incredible activity, in fifty-eight days reached Saxa Rubra, only nine miles from Rome, and beheld the last army of the tyrant drawn up in battle array.

During the victories of his competitor, Maxentius had remained at Rome immersed in luxury and pleasure: the remonstrances of his officers awakened him from his fatal security, and the clamours of the people compelled him reluctantly to take the field. A more numerous army was collected than either of the former; their long front filled a spacious plain, and the Tyber covered their rear, and forbade their retreat. The event of the battle was such as might have been expected from the characters of the leaders, and the discipline and valour of the troops: the Moors and Numidians fled before, or perished by, the Gallic cavalry; the undisciplined Italians readily abandoned the standard of a tyrant they hated; and the Prætorians, animated by revenge and def-

pair, obtained by their repeated efforts an honour-

A. D. 312. able death. The emperor himself, en-
 Oct. 28th. deavouring to escape by the Milvian
 bridge, was forced by the crowds into the river,
 and was immediately drowned by the weight of
 his armour. His two sons were put to death,
 and his whole race carefully extirpated by the
 conqueror.

The resentment of Constantine was confined to the family of his rival, and his punishments to the obnoxious race of informers. A general act of oblivion quieted the minds of the people of Italy and Africa; and Constantine, for the first time, honoured the senate with his presence, and assured that illustrious order of his sincere regard. Games and festivals were instituted to perpetuate the fame of his victory, but the triumphal arch of the victor still remains a melancholy proof of the decline of the arts. No sculptor was found in the capital, capable of adorning that public monument: the arch of Trajan was stripped of its ornaments; and Parthian figures appear prostrate at the feet of a prince, who never carried his arms beyond the Euphrates.

The final abolition of the Prætorian guards succeeded the triumph of Constantine; their fortified camp was destroyed, and the few who had escaped the sword, were dispersed among the le-
 gions,

gions, and banished to the frontiers. A perpetual tax was also imposed by the conqueror on the senate. They were divided into classes, according to the proportion of their property; the most opulent class paid annually eight pounds of gold, the second four, the third two; and even the poorest were assessed at seven pieces of gold.

The victorious emperor, after the defeat of Maxentius, remained at Rome not more than two or three months. Before he marched into Italy, he had secured the neutrality of, and promised his sister Constantia in marriage to, A. D. 313.
Licinius. An interview between the March.

two princes, to celebrate the nuptials, was appointed at Milan on the conclusion of the war; but in the midst of their festivity, they were obliged to take leave of each other. Constantine repaired to the Rhine, to repel an inroad of the Franks; and the presence of Licinius was required by the hostile approach of Maximin. That prince had been the secret ally of Maxentius, and without being discouraged by his fate, resolved to try the fortune of civil war. In the midst of winter, he marched from Syria towards Bythia, leaving behind him his heavy baggage; though the season was severe, and the roads broken, he pursued his course with extraordinary diligence, and arrived with his harassed but formidable army

on the banks of the Bosphorus, before the lieutenants of Licinius were apprised of his hostile intentions. Byzantium surrendered after a siege of eleven days, and he had scarce taken possession of Heraclea, before he was alarmed by the appearance of Licinius. After a fruitless negotia-

A. D. 313. tion, the emperor of the east, at the
April 30. head of seventy thousand men, was

defeated by Licinius and thirty thousand Illyrians. The speed which Maximin exerted in his flight, is almost incredible; twenty-four hours after his defeat, he entered Nicomedia, one hundred and sixty miles distant from the scene of action. He survived his misfortune only three or four months, and his death is variously ascribed to despair, to poison, and to divine justice: the provinces of the east beheld his fate without regret, and cheerfully recognised the authority of Licinius.

The family of the vanquished emperor was *extinguished* by the revenge or policy of Licinius; but the murder of Candidianus, the natural son of Galerius, was an act of the blackest cruelty and ingratitude. He was advancing towards his twentieth year, when his royal birth excited the mortal jealousy of Licinius: to this innocent victim, we may add the wife and daughter of Diocletian. Valeria was, by the emperor, bestowed in marriage

marriage on Galerius, when he was advanced to the rank of Cæsar. On the death of that prince she rejected the hand, and aroused the persecuting fury, of Maximin : her estates were confiscated, her friends and domestics tortured, and the empress herself, with her mother Prisca, was condemned to exile. Diocletian in vain intreated that Valeria might be permitted to share his retirement at Salona ; the pride of Maximin was gratified in the refusal. The death of the tyrant elated these unhappy females with hopes of returning prosperity ; they were at first received by Licinius with respect ; but the murder of Candidianus convinced them of what they might expect ; and Valeria, with her mother Prisca, escaping the vigilance of the guards, wandered through the provinces in disguise above fifteen months ; they were at length discovered at Theffalonica, immediately beheaded, and their bodies thrown into the sea : such was the unworthy fate of the wife and daughter of Diocletian.

The Roman world was now divided between Constantine and Licinius ; and the victorious emperors, impatient of an equal, in less than a year turned their arms against each other. Constantine had bestowed his sister Anastasia on Bassianus, and elevated his new kinsman to the rank of Cæsar. Italy was intended for his

A. D. 314.

department; but the performance of the promise was so long delayed, as to alienate the affections of Bassianus. The arts of Licinius inflamed his ambition, but the vigilant Constantine soon discovered their intrigues; he renounced the alliance of Bassianus, and despoiled him of the purple. The haughty refusal of Licinius to deliver up the criminals who had taken refuge in his dominions, was the signal of war between the two emperors.

A. D. 315.

Oct. 8th.

The first battle was fought near Cibalis, a city of Pannonia. The forces of Constantine amounted only to twenty thousand; those of Licinius to thirty-five thousand men: the contest lasted from the dawn of day to a late hour of evening; when a charge of Constantine in person was decisive, and the troops of Licinius were only saved from total defeat by a judicious retreat. His loss allowed him not to remain in the neighbourhood of a victorious enemy; at the head of his cavalry he marched away with diligence, hastened to collect a new army in Dacia and Thrace, and in his flight bestowed the precarious title of Cæsar on Valens, his general of the Illyrian frontier.

The plain of Mardia in Thrace was the theatre of a second combat equally bloody, and the superior abilities of Constantine once more proved triumphant. Five thousand of his soldiers from
an

an advantageous height, attacked their enemy in the rear; but the troops of Licinius, though pressed on every side, still maintained their ground, and on the approach of night secured their retreat to the mountains of Macedonia.

The loss of two battles had ruined the forces, but they had displayed the courage and abilities of Licinius; Constantine respected his despair, and consented to terms of accommodation. The abdication and death of Valens, with the cession of the provinces of Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece, were the price of reconciliation. It was also stipulated, that Crispus and young Constantine should be declared A. D. 315.
Cæsars in the west, and the younger Dec.
Licinius be invested with the same dignity in the east.

This interval from civil commotion was employed by Constantine in revising the jurisprudence of the empire. Among a crowd of laws, two may be selected; the one the suggestion of humanity, the other the dictate of excessive severity. The intent of the former, was to abolish the practice of exposing or murdering new born infants; this practice was the effect of distress, and the distress was occasioned by the intolerable weight of taxes; Constantine addressed an edict to all the cities of Italy and Africa, directing relief to be given to
all

all parents who should produce before the magistrates, children whom their poverty allowed them not to maintain. The latter law was nominally pointed against rapes, but extended to the violation of female chastity either by force or seduction. Whoever should persuade an unmarried woman, under twenty-five years of age, to leave her parents house, was liable to be burnt alive, or devoured by wild beasts in the amphitheatre; and any slaves, his accessaries, were devoted to death, by pouring down their throats a quantity of melted lead.

The military defence of the empire sometimes interrupted the civil administration. Crispus, who had received with the title of Cæsar the command on the Rhine, by successive victories over the Franks and Alemanni, taught the barbarians to dread the eldest son of Constantine: The emperor himself retained the more difficult and important province of the Danube. The strength of the Goths, since the times of Claudius and Aurelian, was restored by a peace of near fifty years; the Sarmatians of the Lake Mæotis followed their standards, and their united force was poured upon the countries of Illyricum. After several obstinate encounters, the Goths were compelled to purchase an ignominious retreat, by restoring their prisoners and booty; and the victorious

rious emperor, not content with this advantage, passed the Danube, and after a severe revenge, condescended to grant a peace to the suppliant barbarians, on condition they should supply his armies, as often as they were required, with forty thousand soldiers.

The exalted state of Constantine would no longer endure a partner in the empire: eight years had elapsed since the last treaty; and without any previous injury, he prepared to complete the destruction of Licinius. The

A. D. 323.

old emperor, aroused by the approach of danger, called forth unexpected resources: he filled the streights of the Hellespont with his fleet, and the plains of Hadrianople, with his forces. In the last, at the head of one hundred and fifty thousand infantry, and fifteen thousand cavalry, he awaited the attack of his rival, who with one hundred and twenty thousand horse and foot, confiding in the superiority of his genius, rushed to the encounter: the broad and rapid stream of the Hebrus, checked for some days the ar-

A. D. 323.

dor of Constantine, and protracted the fate of Licinius; it was at last crossed by the former in person, and the army of the latter, unable to withstand the impetuous charge of the emperor of the west, fled before his fury. Licinius with difficulty escaped within the walls of Byzantium.

July 3.

The

The siege of Byzantium was immediately undertaken by Constantine ; but as long as Licinius remained master of the sea, the army of the besiegers was more exposed to famine than the garrison. The naval squadrons of Constantine were collected from every quarter ; the command of the fleet was intrusted to Crispus, the emperor's eldest son : his orders were positive to force the passage of the Hellespont ; and in an engagement which lasted two days, he commanded the esteem, and probably excited the jealousy, of his father. Of the vessels of Licinius, one hundred and thirty were destroyed, and the admiral Amandus escaped with difficulty to the shores of Chalcedon. Provisions flowed into the camp of Constantine, the operations of the siege were rapidly advanced, and the walls of Byzantium were already shaken by the military engines of its assailants.

Licinius, alarmed lest he should be involved in the ruin of the place, removed his person and treasures to Chalcedon ; he bestowed the vain and fatal title of Cæsar on an officer named Martinianus, and collected in Bithynia a new army of fifty or sixty thousand men : but he was soon followed by the victorious troops of the vigilant Constantine ; and his new raised levies, after displaying a desperate but ineffectual valour, were defeated with the slaughter of twenty-five thousand :

sand: the emperor escaped to Nicomedia; by the intercession of Constantia, his wife, and the sister of Constantine, he obtained a solemn promise, that on sacrificing Martinianus, and resigning the purple, he should be permitted to pass the remainder of his life in peace and affluence. After prostrating himself before his conqueror, he was sent away to Thessalonica: his confinement was soon terminated by death, and the pretence for his execution, was a treasonable correspondence held with the barbarians. The victory of Constantine united under the authority of one emperor the Roman world, thirty-seven years after Diocletian had divided it; and the result of this union was the foundation of Constantinople, and the establishment of the christian religion.

A. D. 324.

The progress and establishment of the christian religion was favoured and assisted by five principal causes. I. The inflexible zeal of the christians derived from the Jewish religion, but purified from its narrow and unsocial spirit, which hitherto had deterred the gentiles from embracing its laws. The promise of divine favour, instead of being confined to the posterity of Abraham, was extended to the freeman and the slave, the Jew and the Gentile. To the proselyte of the church was reserved every privilege that could exalt his devotion

tion or secure his happiness ; but at the same time all mankind was solicited to accept the glorious distinction, and it became the sacred duty of a new convert to diffuse the inestimable blessing among his friends and relations. With equal diligence he guarded the chastity of the gospel against the infectious breath of idolatry ; and as often as the superstitious rites of the established religion were practised, they afforded the christians an opportunity of declaring and confirming their zealous opposition.

II. The doctrine of a future life, and the immortality of the soul, though generally rejected, had impressed the minds of the more exalted sages of Greece and Rome. Philosophy pointed out the hope, but divine revelation alone can ascertain the existence, of a future state. The sanguine temper of the Jews embraced the idea with characteristic zeal ; but it was still necessary the doctrine should obtain the sanction of truth, from the authority and example of Christ ; and the promise of eternal happiness, on the condition of observing the precepts of the gospel, was accepted by great numbers of every religion, of every rank, and of every province, in the Roman empire.

III. The miraculous powers of the primitive church conduced frequently to the conviction of infidels. The apostles and their disciples asserted
their

their power of expelling dæmons, of healing the sick, and of raising the dead ; and the fluctuating Pagan was easily persuaded to enter into a society which claimed the exclusive possession of gifts, so highly advantageous and so eminently supernatural.

IV. The virtues of the first christians corresponded with the purity of their doctrines, and concurring writers display the reformation of manners which was introduced into the world by the preaching of the gospel ; even their errors were derived from an excess of virtue ; and the height to which the zealous fathers carried the duties of self-mortification, of chastity, and of patience, must inevitably have commanded the veneration of the people, and increased the number of their followers.

V. The activity of the christians in the government of the church, was marked by a spirit of patriotism, such as had characterised the first of the Romans in the aggrandisement of the republic. The ecclesiastical governors of the christians were taught to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove. In the church, as well as in the world, the persons placed in any public station rendered themselves considerable by their eloquence and firmness, by their knowledge of mankind, and by their dexterity in business ; and the exertion of these qualifications

was advantageously contrasted with the cool indifference of the ministers of Polytheism.

It was by the aid of these causes, exclusive zeal, the immediate expectation of another world, the claim of miracles, the practice of rigid virtue, and the constitution of the primitive church, that christianity spread itself with so much success in the Roman empire : at the moment of its first appearance, we may find by the writings of contemporary authors, how far its progress was likely to be facilitated by the prevailing scepticism of the Pagan world ; yet, though fear or devotion has alternately magnified the numbers of proselytes, from the most favourable calculation we are not permitted to conclude, that more than a twentieth part of the subjects of the empire had enlisted themselves under the banner of the cross before the conversion of Constantine.

To oppose the progress of this new doctrine, the religious policy of the ancient world seems to have assumed a more stern and intolerant character than usual. The christians were considered as a sect of the Jews, and the steady faith of the former was confounded with the stubborn and rebellious disposition of the latter. Yet the first persecution we can discover against the followers of Christ, subsequent to his death, was in the tenth year of the reign of Nero, when the capital was
nearly

nearly destroyed by the unprecedented rage of fire; the voice of rumour accused the emperor as the guilty incendiary, and he, to divert the suspicion, inflicted the most exquisite tortures on the christians. During the reign of Domitian, they were again subjected to the destructive jealousy of imperial authority: about ten years afterwards, in the reign of Trajan, we find the younger Pliny, then governor of Bithynia and Pontus, requesting from the emperor instructions for his conduct towards these new sectaries; the answer of the prince acknowledges the difficulty of laying down any general plan; he directs the magistrates to punish such persons as are legally convicted, but prohibits them from making any inquiries concerning the supposed criminals; anonymous charges he rejects, and strictly requires the positive evidence of a fair and open accuser.

In the reign of Commodus, the christians enjoyed a singular exemption from the cruel caprice of that tyrant; they were protected by Marcia, the most favoured of his concubines. The superstition of Severus, who was persuaded he had received in illness some benefit from being anointed with holy oil, continued to them an indulgent distinction; and Caracalla, in this single instance, seems to have observed the in-

A. D. 180.

A. D. 200.

A. D. 212.

228 DECLINE AND FALL OF

clinations of his father. The statues of Abraham, of Orpheus, of Apollonius, and of Christ, were indiscriminately introduced by Alexander Severus into his domestic chapel, and his temporary favour exposed the christians to the inhuman fury of his successor Maximin.

A. D. 225. On the usurpation of the emperor Philip, who was born in Palestine, the christians acquired a friend and protector; but the edicts of his successor Decius were dictated by a desire of delivering the empire from what he considered as a criminal superstition. The beginning of Valerian's administration was equally distinguished for clemency, as the conclusion of it was for severity towards the christians; while under the subsequent authority of his son Gallienus, they enjoyed uniform toleration and indulgence.

A. D. 253, 260. It was not till the eighteenth year of his reign, that Diocletian could be persuaded by Galerius to begin a general persecution against the christians;

A. D. 303, 311. some slight opposition, to his edict, in Syria, and the frontiers of Armenia, inflamed the resentment of the emperor, and his suspicions were awakened by his palace at Nicomedia, and even his bed-chamber, being endangered by fire twice within fifteen days. He declared

clared his intention of abolishing the christian name, but almost immediately after this declaration, he divested himself of the purple, and devolved on his colleagues the invidious execution of his rigorous edicts.

In the western provinces, the mild temper of Constantius was averse to the oppression of any part of his subjects; and his fortunate son, on the moment of his accession, declared himself the protector of the church. In Italy and Africa, Severus adopted the sentiments of his benefactor Galerius, and cheerfully enforced the most severe edicts against christianity; but the revolt of Maxentius restored security to the afflicted christians. In Illyricum and the east, the sanguinary temper of Galerius was formidable to the disciples of Christ, but the experience of six years persecution convinced him of the fruitless attempt; and a short time before his death, he published in favour of the christians a general edict of toleration. To this the gratitude of Li-

A. D. 311.

nated till the defeat and death of the tyrant delivered the church from the last and most unrelenting of her enemies.

A. D. 313.

Though the ancient writers pour forth an effusion of invective, without ascertaining the number of those who sealed with their blood the belief of the gospel, yet we may collect from Eusebius, that only nine bishops were punished with death. In Palestine, only ninety-two christians were honoured with the appellation of martyrs; yet Palestine formed a sixteenth part of the eastern empire, and first gave birth to christianity. Supposing the other provinces to have suffered in the same proportion, the number of christians executed during the ten years persecution of Galerius and Maximin, will amount to fifteen hundred, or one hundred and fifty every year; and extending this computation to Italy, Africa, and Spain, where the penal laws were suspended or abolished in three or four years, we may reasonably conclude, that the number of christians throughout the Roman empire, on whom a capital punishment was inflicted by a judicial sentence, did not exceed two thousand persons.

CHAPTER XI.

FOUNDATION OF CONSTANTINOPLE—POLITICAL
SYSTEM OF CONSTANTINE—MILITARY DISCI-
PLINE—THE PALACE—THE FINANCES.

THE fortunate Constantine, after vanquishing his rivals, bequeathed to his family the inheritance of the Roman empire, a new capital, a new policy, and a new religion. The important events which mark this æra are various and numerous; and to render them more clear, it will be necessary to separate from each other the scenes which are connected only by the order of time. The political institutions which gave stability to the empire will first occupy our attention; the wars and revolutions which hastened its decline, next demand our consideration: much must be given to civil, and something will be allowed to ecclesiastical affairs.

The motives which induced Diocletian to withdraw himself from the ancient seat of government

had acquired additional weight by the examples of forty years; Rome was regarded with cold indifference by a martial prince, born in the neighbourhood of the Danube, educated in Asia, and invested with the purple in Britain. Constantine hitherto had moved along the frontiers, according to the various exigencies of peace and war; but as he gradually reached the summit of prosperity, and the decline of life, he meditated the design of fixing in a more permanent station the strength and majesty of the throne: He preferred the confines of Europe and Asia, that he might equally observe the barbarians between the Danube and the Tanais, and watch the conduct of the Persian monarch. With these views, Diocletian had selected Nicomedia; but Constantine aspired to the glory of founding a city which might perpetuate his own name, and the incomparable position of Byzantium determined the choice of Constantine,

The form Byzantium acquired under the name of Constantinople, may be represented by the figure of an unequal triangle. The obtuse point, which advances towards the east and the shores of Asia, meets and repels the waves of the Thracian Bosphorus; the northern side of the city is bounded by the harbour, and the southern is washed by the Propontis, or sea of Marmara; the
basis

- basis of the triangle is opposed to the west, and terminates the continent of Europe.

The winding channel, through which the waters of the Euxine flow incessantly towards the Mediterranean, received the name of Bosphorus; the streights of it are terminated by the Cyanean rocks, and from these to the point and harbour of Byzantium its length extends sixteen miles. The harbour of Constantinople may be considered as an arm of the Bosphorus; the river Lycus pours into its bosom a perpetual supply of fresh water; the depth of the harbour allows goods to be landed on the quays, without the assistance of boats; and from its mouth to that of the Lycus, this arm of the Bosphorus is more than seven miles in length.

Between the Bosphorus and Hellespont, the shores of Asia receding, inclose the sea of Marmara, called by the ancients the Propontis. From the issue of the Bosphorus to the entrance of the Hellespont, is about one hundred and twenty miles; and geographers have assigned about sixty miles for the winding course, and about three miles for the ordinary breadth, of these celebrated streights. Ancient Troy, seated on an eminence at the foot of mount Ida, overlooked the mouth of the Hellespont. Before Constantine gave a just preference to Byzantium, he had conceived the

the design of erecting his capital on the spot whence the Romans derived their fabulous origin; and the extensive plain which lies below ancient Troy, towards the Rhætian promontory, was first chosen for the seat of empire.

The advantageous position of Constantinople, situated in the forty-first degree of latitude, seems formed by nature for the capital of a great monarchy; the climate was healthy, the soil fertile; the harbour was secure and capacious, and the approach on the side of the continent was of small extent, and easy defence. The prospect of beauty, of safety, of wealth, justified the determination of Constantine; yet it was thought some decent mixture of prodigy would reflect a becoming majesty on the origin of a great city; and the emperor in one of his laws, has transmitted to posterity, that he laid the foundations of Constantinople in obedience to the commands of God. The day which gave birth to the city was celebrated by a solemn procession led by the emperor in person, who on foot, with a lance in his hand, traced the boundary of the destined capital. When admonished by his followers, that he had already exceeded the most ample measure of a great city, "I shall still advance," replied Constantine, "till He, the invisible guide who marches before me, thinks proper to stop."

The

The new walls of Constantine inclosed, with the city of Byzantium, five of the seven hills, which, on the approach to Constantinople, appear to rise above each other. The new buildings, about a century after the death of the founder, covered the narrow ridge of the sixth, and the broad summit of the seventh, hill; and the younger Theodosius, to protect these suburbs from the inroads of the barbarians, surrounded the whole with adequate walls: yet even including the suburbs of Pera and Galata, which are situated beyond the harbour, the circumference of Constantinople cannot exceed fourteen Roman miles.

To erect an eternal monument to his glories, the emperor employed the subject wealth and labour of the Roman world; for the construction of the walls alone were allowed two millions five hundred thousand pounds. But the decline of the arts compelled him to adorn his capital with the works of remoter periods; and to gratify his vanity, the cities of and Greece Asia were despoiled of their most valuable ornaments. Whatever could exalt the dignity of a great city, or contribute to the benefit or pleasure of its numerous inhabitants, was to be found within the walls of Constantinople. A particular description, composed about a century after its foundation, enumerates a capital or school of learning, a circus,

two

two theatres, eight public and one hundred and fifty-three private baths, fifty-two porticoes, five granaries, eight aqueducts of water, four spacious halls of justice, fourteen churches, fourteen palaces, and four thousand three hundred and eighty-eight houses, which for their size or beauty, deserved to be distinguished from the multitude of plebeian habitations.

The populousness of his favoured city was the next and most serious object of the attention of its founder. The inhabitants of Rome and the more ancient cities of the empire were at first allured or compelled to relinquish their residences; but encouragements and obligations soon became unnecessary; the subjects of the empire were attracted by the seat of government, and Constantinople, in less than a century, disputed with Rome the pre-eminence of riches and numbers.

The magnificence of the first Cæsars, in the distribution of wine, oil, and corn to the citizens of Rome, was imitated by the founder of Constantinople, and an annual tribute of corn was imposed on Ægypt, to feed the populace of his new capital; he also divided Constantinople into fourteen quarters, dignified the public council with the name of senate, and bestowed on the rising city the title of Colony, the first and most favoured daughter of ancient Rome; His impatience and
power

power combining, compleated the walls and principal edifices within a few years from his laying the foundation of the city. At the festival of the dedication, he honoured it with the name of *Second* or *New Rome*, but the appellation A.D. 330 of Constantinople has prevailed, and or 34. still perpetuates the fame of its author.

From the foundation of a new capital, we turn to the establishment of a new form of civil and military administration. This enquiry will include a period of about one hundred and thirty years, from the accession of Constantine to the publication of the Theodosian codes. The simplicity of Roman manners on the loss of freedom, was corrupted by the affectation of the courts of Asia, and instead of the distinctions of personal merit, a severe subordination of rank and office was substituted. In this divine hierarchy (for such it is frequently styled) every degree was marked with the most scrupulous exactness, and the magistrates of sufficient importance to find a place in the state of the empire, were accurately divided into three classes. 1. The illustrious. 2. The respectable. 3. The honourable. The latter epithet was appropriated to all who were members of the senate. The vanity of those who might claim, from rank or office, a distinction above the rest of the senatorial order, was indulged with the appellation of respectable;

respectable; but the title of illustrious was reserved to the eminent few who were revered by the two subordinate classes. I. The consuls and Patricians. II. The Prætorian præfects, with those of Rome and Constantinople. III. The masters general of the cavalry and the infantry. And, IV. The seven magistrates who exercised their functions about the person of the emperor. Among those magistrates, who were esteemed co-ordinate with each other, the seniority of appointment gave place to the union of dignities.

I. From the reign of Diocletian, the consuls had been created by the sole power of the emperor: their inauguration was performed at the place of the imperial residence; a pompous procession on the first of January accompanied their receiving the robe of purple; in the manumission of a slave, they were permitted to exercise an act of jurisdiction; and after exhibiting games for several days, at the expence of one hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling, they were at liberty to retire into private life, and contemplate undisturbed their own greatness. Yet the title of consul was still the most splendid object of ambition, and the emperors themselves were conscious they acquired an additional grandeur as often as they assumed the consular dignity.

The ancient Patricians, till vanquished by the persevering efforts of the tribunes, had possessed
and

and communicated to their posterity almost the exclusive right to wealth and honours, the offices of the state and the ceremonies of religion; but the Patrician families had been extinguished either by foreign or domestic wars, or had failed in the ordinary course of nature; and when Constantine ascended the throne, little more was left than a tradition that the Patricians had been once the first of Romans. But though the emperor revived the title of Patrician, he revived it as a personal, not as an hereditary distinction; they yielded only to the transient superiority of the consuls, and their honourable rank was bestowed on them for life. As they were usually ministers who had grown old in the imperial court, the etymology of the word was perverted by ignorance and flattery, and the Patricians of Constantine were revered as the adopted *fathers* of the emperor and the republic.

II. The Prætorian præfects formerly so formidable, when the Prætorian bands were suppressed by Constantine were reduced to the station of useful and obedient ministers; they were deprived of all military command, but to their care was entrusted the most important civil functions, the supreme administration of justice, and of the finances. They were four in number, and divided between them the provinces of the Roman empire. 1. The præfect of the east stretched his jurisdiction

jurisdiction from the cataracts of the Nile to the banks of the Phasis, and from the mountains of Thrace to the frontiers of Persia: 2. The Præfect of Illyricum presided over the provinces of Pannonia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece. 3. The præfect of Italy, besides that country, was acknowledged by the territory of Rhætia, the islands of the Mediterranean, and that part of the continent of Africa which lies between Cyrene and Tingitania. The præfect of the Gauls was obeyed by the provinces of Britain and Spain; and his authority extended from the wall of Antoninus to the foot of mount Atlas. Rome and Constantinople, from their superior importance, were excepted from the power of the Prætorian præfects; and enjoyed two præfects of their own; these presided over the senate, received appeals from the distance of one hundred miles from each respective city, and were the acknowledged source of all municipal authority.

In the class of the *respectable*, the proconsuls of Asia, Achaia, and Africa claimed pre-eminence; but the civil government of the empire was distributed into thirteen dioceses. The first of these dioceses was subject to the *counts* of the east; the governor of Egypt still retained the title of *Augustal præfect*, and the eleven remaining dioceses were governed by vicars or vice-præfects. The
lieutenant

lieutenant-generals of the Roman armies, the military counts and dukes, were also allowed the rank and title of *respectable*.

The spirit of jealousy had induced the emperors to divide the empire into one hundred and sixteen provinces; three were governed by *pro-consuls*, thirty-seven by *consulars*, five by *correctors*, and seventy-one by *presidents*: all these (excepting the *pro-consuls*) were included in the class of honourables. The civil magistrates were drawn from the profession of the law, and by successive steps, from assessors, they arrived to the *illustrious* dignities of the state.

III. The supreme jurisdiction, exercised by the Prætorian præfects over the armies of the empire, was transferred by Constantine to two *masters general*, whom he instituted, the one for cavalry, and the other for infantry. Their number was doubled by the division of the east and west; and they were at last augmented to eight; these were appointed to the four important frontiers of the Rhine, the upper and the lower Danube, and the Euphrates: under these were stationed thirty-five military commanders; three in Britain, six in Gaul, one in Spain, one in Italy, five on the upper, and four on the lower Danube; in Asia eight, three in Egypt, and four in Africa. All these provincial generals were *dukes*; but only ten were

dignified with the rank of counts: the dukes and counts exercised over the troops, an authority independent of the magistrates; but they were prohibited from interfering with the administration of justice or the revenue. The discord which frequently reigned between the civil and military powers might secure the tranquillity of the monarch, but it relaxed the vigour of the state.

The memory of Constantine, which has been censured for this divided administration, suffered also from another innovation which corrupted military discipline: nineteen years of civil war, which preceded the defeat of Licinius, had introduced a spirit of licence, which the emperor wanted wisdom or firmness to suppress. From the reign of Constantine, a popular and even legal distinction was introduced between the *Palatines* and the *Borderers*; the troops of the court, as they were styled, and those of the frontier. The former, with superior pay and privileges, except in emergencies of war, occupied the heart of the provinces, and readily forgot the virtues of their profession, while they contracted the vices of civil life. The troops of the frontier became also soon relaxed in their discipline, and contrasted the hardships of perpetual warfare with their inferior pay and emoluments. The reduction of the legions, from six thousand to one thousand, or fifteen hundred

dred men, served likewise to weaken their martial pride; although it gratified the vanity of the sovereign, who could issue his orders to one hundred and thirty-two legions: the rest of the troops were distributed into several cohorts of infantry, or squadrons of cavalry, and the military establishment of the successors of Constantine may be computed at six hundred and forty-five thousand soldiers.

The difficulty of levies, though the stature was lowered and slaves by connivance received, obliged the emperors to adopt more effectual methods. Lands were granted to veterans, under condition that their sons should devote themselves to the profession of arms; and their refusal was punished by the loss of honour, of fortune, and even life. Levies were sometimes required of the provinces, and every proprietor was obliged to take up arms, procure a substitute, or pay forty-two pieces of gold. The introduction of barbarians among the troops became every day more universal, more necessary, and more fatal: those who displayed any military talents, were advanced to the most important commands, and sometimes instead of resisting, invited the invasion of their countrymen. It was reserved for the age of Constantine, to behold with approbation, barbarians invested with the consular ornaments.

IV. Besides the magistrates and generals, the emperor bestowed the title of *illustrious* on seven of his more immediate servants. 1. His *præpositus* or chamberlain, who governed the private apartments of the palace, and attended the sovereign in his hours of state. 2. The *master of the offices*, to whose abilities was committed the principal administration of public affairs, and who devolved his commands on four inferior masters, and one hundred and forty-eight secretaries. 3. His *quaestor*, who composed his orations, or, as they might with more propriety be termed, his edicts. 4. His *count of the sacred largesses*, or public treasurer, who presided over the internal revenue, and foreign trade of the empire. 5. His *count*, or treasurer, of *the private estate*; part of which had possibly been the antient demesnes of kings and republics, but the greater portion arose from confiscations and forfeitures. 6, 7. The two *counts of the domestics*, who commanded the chosen bands which guarded the person of the emperor; these were chiefly composed of Armenians, and were remarkable for their lofty stature, silent order, and splendid arms.

The *agents* who maintained the intercourse between the court and the provinces, soon degenerated into the condition of official spies: from three hundred, they were multiplied under a feeble

ble reign, to the incredible number of ten thousand; they were encouraged by favour and reward, to watch the most latent symptom of disaffection; and the defects of evidence were diligently supplied by the use of torture.

The deceitful experiment of the criminal *question*, as it is emphatically styled, was admitted, rather than approved, in the jurisprudence of the Romans: it was applied only to servile bodies, and as long as the faintest remembrance was kept alive of the national freedom and honour, the last hours of a Roman were secure from ignominious torture. But a fatal maxim was introduced into the new jurisprudence of the empire; and in the case of treason, which included every offence that could be derived from an *hostile intention* towards the prince or republic, all privileges were suspended, and every sex, age, and station, were exposed to the dangerous examination of the rack.

The evils arising however from malicious accusations, affected but few; the obscure millions had much more to dread from the avarice than the cruelty of their masters. The accumulated weight of Roman taxes was intolerable; and the tributes or indictments, as the edicts were termed from being subscribed by the emperor, were imposed with unfeeling alacrity, and levied with scrupulous accuracy. The lands were measured by

surveyors, and the nature of them distinctly reported; the numbers of slaves and cattle were received from the proprietors upon oath; a large portion of the tribute was required in money, and of the current coin of the empire gold only was accepted; the remainder, according to the proportions prescribed in the annual indictions, was furnished in the articles of wine, oil, corn, wood, or iron, and transported by the labour of the provincials to the imperial magazines. The mode of assessment seemed to unite the substance of a land tax with the forms of a capitation; the number of tributary subjects was returned from every province with the amount of the impositions: the latter of these sums was divided by the former, and it was then computed what was the average rate on each head. The ministers of constantius fixed the capitation for Gaul at twenty-five pieces of gold; the humane policy of Julian reduced it to seven.

A distinct and personal tribute was imposed on the trading subjects of the Roman empire; some indulgence was allowed to those proprietors who disposed of the produce of their own estates, and to the professors of the liberal arts; but every other branch of commercial industry was affected by the severity of the law. To these taxes, levied by the absolute authority of the monarch, may be
added

added the free gifts, or *coronary* gold, which still retained the semblance of popular consent. The ancient custom of voluntarily bestowing crowns of gold on a victorious general was converted into a permanent and productive branch of the revenue, and exacted as often as the emperor thought proper to announce any real or imaginary event which graced the annals of his reign.

Though the subjects of Constantine were incapable of discerning the decline of genius and manly virtue, they could feel and lament the rage of tyranny, the relaxation of discipline, and the increase of taxes; yet some advantages tended to compensate for their apparent misery. The impending tempest from the neighbouring barbarians, which afterwards overwhelmed the empire, was still suspended; the principles of jurisprudence preserved a sense of order and equity; literature was cultivated, the pleasures of society enjoyed, and military licence restrained by the forms and pomp of the civil administration.

CHAPTER XII.

CHARACTER OF CONSTANTINE—GOTHIC WAR—DEATH
OF CONSTANTINE—DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE AMONG
HIS THREE SONS—PERSIAN WAR—TRAGIC DEATH
OF CONSTANTINE THE YOUNGER, AND CON-
STANS—USURPATION OF MAGNENTIUS—
VICTORY OF CONSTANTIUS.

THE various characters given to Constantine, according to the zeal of his Christian, or the indignation of his Pagan subjects, are perhaps equally remote from truth; by blending the defects ascribed by his admirers, and the virtues acknowledged by his enemies, we may hope to delineate a just portrait of this extraordinary man, who removed the seat of empire, and introduced such important changes into the civil and religious constitution of his country,

The person, as well as mind of Constantine, had been enriched by nature. His stature was lofty, his countenance majestic, and his deportment graceful; in every exercise he displayed
strength

strength and activity, and his adherence to chastity and temperance preserved his constitution to a very late period of life. He delighted in familiar conversation, and though he sometimes indulged raillery too freely for his station, yet the courtesy of his manners gained the hearts of all who approached him; though his sincerity in friendship has been suspected, yet on several occasions, he gave proofs of a warm and lasting attachment; though his education had been illiterate, he valued learning, and encouraged by his munificence the arts and sciences. In dispatch of business, he was indefatigable; he gave audience in person to ambassadors, and examined himself the complaints of his subjects. In the field, he was an intrepid soldier and consummate general; to his own talents, in a great measure, may be ascribed his victories; and he seemed to consider glory as the reward, and perhaps the motive of his labours.

Such, during the early and greatest part of his reign, was the character of Constantine; but we are obliged to confess, the conclusion degraded him from the rank he had acquired among the most deserving of the Roman princes. His old age was disgraced by the opposite, yet reconcilable vices of rapaciousness and prodigality; his magnificence was supported by the oppression of
his

his subjects; his favourites usurped with impunity the privilege of rapine and corruption; an universal decay was felt through every part of the administration; and the emperor, though he retained the obedience, had lost the esteem of his subjects. His dress and manners, towards the close of life, exposed him to the ridicule of mankind; he is represented with false hair of various colours, a profusion of gems and pearls, and a flowing robe of embroidered silk; in such apparel, we are at a loss to discover the wisdom of an aged monarch, and the simplicity of a Roman veteran.

The fortune which had attended Constantine in public seemed to secure the comforts of his domestic life. By his first wife, Minervina, he had only one son, who was called Crispus; but by Fausta, the daughter of Maximian, he had three daughters and three sons known by the names of Constantine, Constantius, and Constans. The unambitious brothers of the great Constantine, Julius Constantius, Dalmatius, and Hannibalianus, enjoyed the most honourable rank and affluent fortune consistent with a private station. The youngest of the three died, scarcely known, and without posterity. Of the two elder, Gallus and Julian were the most illustrious of the children of Julius Constantius,

stantius ; and the sons of Dalmatius were named Dalmatius and Hannibalianus. Anastasia and Eutropia, two sisters of the emperor, were bestowed on Optatus and Nepotianus, two senators of consular dignity ; Constantia, the third sister, remained the widow of Licinius, and her entreaties preserved for some time, the life of an innocent boy, the offspring of their marriage. In less than thirty years, this numerous family, which seemed destined to support the throne of Constantine, was reduced to the persons of Constantius and Julian, who alone had survived a series of crimes and calamities.

The military prowess of Crispus displayed against the Germans, and the superior fleet of Licinius, with his amiable private qualities, had engaged the affections of the court, the army, and the people. His dangerous popularity soon excited the attention of Constantine, who, as a father and a king, was impatient of an equal. Crispus could not disguise his discontent, that while his infant brother Constantius was sent, with the title of Cæsar, to reign over the Gallic provinces, he, a prince of such mature years, who had performed such signal services, was confined almost a prisoner in his father's court. Such painful circumstances might well give birth to expressions of unguarded warmth, and these were possibly exaggerated

gerated in the report of malicious and interested informers. An edict of Constantine, published about this time, proclaims his suspicion of some secret conspiracy; and he invites, by the allurements of honours and rewards, accusations against his magistrates or ministers, his friends or most intimate favourites.

The informers who complied with this liberal invitation, selected the friends and adherents of Crispus as the guilty persons; yet Constantine still maintained the appearance of the same regard towards his son. The emperor had removed his court to Nicomedia, to celebrate the twentieth year of his reign. In the midst of the festival, the unfortunate Crispus was apprehended, and Constantine laid aside the tenderness of the father, without assuming the equity of a judge. The examination was short and private; the young prince was conducted to Pola, in Istria, where soon afterwards he perished, either by the hands of the executioner, or the more secret effect of poison; the son of Licinius was involved in the ruin of Crispus: the nature and evidence of the guilt, with the forms of the trial of these unhappy princes, were studiously enveloped in mysterious obscurity.

The misfortunes of Crispus were imputed to the arts of his step-mother Fausta, who considered him,

him, with reason, as the most dangerous rival of her sons. But Helena, the aged mother of Constantine, lamented and avenged the untimely fate of her grandson Crispus. A real or pretended discovery was made, that Fausta entertained a criminal connexion with a slave; and it is generally asserted, that in consequence of the charge, the adulteress was suffocated by the steam of a bath. Yet, notwithstanding the testimony of several Christian and Pagan writers, there is reason to believe that Fausta escaped the suspicious cruelty of her husband.

By the death of Crispus, the inheritance of the Roman world devolved on the children of Fausta, who have already been mentioned under the names of Constantine, of Constantius, and of Constans. These young princes were successively invested with the purple, in the tenth, twentieth, and thirtieth years of the reign of their father. The emperor also conferred the title of Cæsar on his nephew Dalmatius, and bestowed on Hannibalianus the new-invented appellation of Nobilissimus.

The exercises of these five youths prepared them for the fatigues of war, and the duties of an active life; and Constantius is allowed to have excelled in the gymnastic arts, and to have proved himself a dexterous archer and skilful horseman. But the minds of the sons and nephews of
Con-

Constantine were not equally favourable with their bodies to the advantages of cultivation. The genius of Constantine had been formed by adversity and experience; but his destined successors had the misfortune of being born and educated in the imperial purple. Admitted by the indulgence of the emperor, at a very tender age, to share the administration of the empire, they studied the art of reigning at the expence of the people entrusted to their care. The younger Constantine was appointed to hold his court in Gaul, which his brother Constantius relinquished for the more opulent but less martial provinces of the east. Italy, the western Illyricum, and Africa were governed by Constans. Dalmatius was fixed on the Gothic frontier, to which were annexed the provinces of Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece. The city of Cæsarea was the residence of Hannibalianus, and Pontus, Cappadocia, and the lesser Armenia formed the extent of his new kingdom. The ministers placed about the young princes were such as Constantine could trust; and the emperor with the title of Augustus, while he shewed the Cæsars to the armies and provinces, maintained the whole in equal obedience to its supreme head.

The Sarmatians, who united the manners of the Asiatic barbarians with the figure and complexion of the inhabitants of Europe, according to the accidents

accidents of peace and war, were confined to the banks of the Tanais, or spread themselves over the plains between the Vistula and Volga. The residence of their wives and children consisted of large moveable waggons, and their military strength was composed of cavalry. The defensive armour of these was a cuirass, formed of horses hoofs, cut into thin slices, and sewed upon an under garment of coarse linen. Their offensive weapons were a short dagger, a long lance, and a weighty bow with a quiver of arrows, their points formed of fish bone; and the custom of dipping them in poison sufficiently attested their savage manners. Soon after the reign of Augustus, they obliged the Dacians to abandon to them the fertile plains of the Upper Hungary, which are bounded by the course of the Danube and the Carpathian mountains. In this advantageous position they frequently assisted their neighbours, the Goths and Germans, with large bodies of cavalry, and gradually acquired the skill of using more dangerous weapons. The Sarmatians had received and chosen a king from the fugitive Vandals, who yielded to the pressure of the Gothic arms; and the confines of these warlike and independent nations were the scenes of frequent and bloody contests. The Sarmatians, at length, implored the assistance of the Roman monarch; but it was scarcely

scarcely promised by Constantine before the haughty Araric, king of the Goths, passed the Danube and spread devastation through the province of Mæsia. To repel the invasion, the aged emperor took the field in person, but he had the mortification to see his troops fly before the barbarians, and was obliged to consult his safety by a precipitate retreat. In a second action, the Roman honour was retrieved; the broken army of the Goths abandoned the field of battle, the province, and the passage of the Danube: the eldest son of Constantine commanded, but the victory was ascribed to the auspicious counsels of the emperor himself. To improve this advantage, the free and warlike people of Chersonesus were allured by Constantine to assist the operations of the imperial generals; the Goths were vanquished on every side, and the eldest son of Araric was given as a hostage to obtain peace. The Chersonites were recompenced with liberality and magnificence, but the Sarmatians were considered as sufficiently rewarded by their deliverance from impending ruin. This neglect, concurring with the natural levity of the barbarians, produced repeated inroads on the empire; and the indignation of Constantine abandoned the Sarmatians to the ambition of Geberic, who had recently ascended the Gothic throne. Wisu-mar,

mar, their Vandal king, was slain in a battle which cut off the flower of the Sarmatian youth. The remainder, by arming their slaves, revenged the defeat and expelled the invader; but these slaves, elated with glory, under the name of Limigantes, usurped the country they had delivered; and their masters, preferring the hardships of exile to the tyranny of their servants, sought refuge with the Goths and the Quadi, or implored the forgiveness of the emperor. This was granted on the promise of inviolable fidelity, and a competent portion of lands in Pannonia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Italy, was assigned for the subsistence of three hundred thousand Sarmatians.

Constantine survived the celebration of the thirtieth year of his reign but ten months, A. D. 337, and at the age of sixty-four, expired at May 22. his palace of Aquyrion, near Nicomedia. His body, according to his last will, was transported to Constantinople. For some time the corpse, adorned with the vain symbols of greatness, was approached with the same respectful homage by the ministers and officers of state, as when animated with life; and the voice of flattery observed Constantine alone had reigned after death.

But the ministers and generals, while they bowed before the inanimate corpse of their late emperor, were engaged in secret consultations to ex-

clude his nephews from the succession he had assigned them: of the motives and particulars of this intrigue we are ignorant, but it was attended by a declaration from the troops, that they would suffer none to participate in the empire but the sons of the late emperor. Dalmatius and Hannibalianus, astonished and unprepared for either flight or resistance, remained in the hands of their enemies, and awaited their fate from Constantius, the second son of Constantine.

The dying emperor had recommended his funeral to the piety of Constantius: the first care of that prince, as soon as he had taken possession of the palace of Constantinople, was to remove the apprehensions of his kinsmen by a solemn oath; his next employment was to find a specious pretence for breaking the recent obligation. From the hands of the bishop of Nicomedia, he received a fictitious scroll, in which the late emperor expressed his suspicions, that he had been poisoned by his brothers, and conjured his sons to revenge his death. The charge was sufficient; the clamours of the soldiers precluded the hope of defence, and even the forms of legal proceedings were violated by a promiscuous massacre, which involved the two uncles of Constantius, seven of his cousins, among whom were Dalmatius and Hannibalianus; the patrician Optatus, who had married

married a sister of the late emperor; and the præfect Ablavius, whose power and riches had inspired him with hopes of obtaining the purple. Of so numerous a family, Gallus and Julian alone were saved from the hands of the assassins.

This massacre was succeeded by a new division of the provinces. Constantine, the eldest of the Cæsars, with a certain pre-eminence of rank, obtained the possession of the new capital; Thrace, and the countries of the east, were allotted to Constantius; and Constans was acknowledged as sovereign by Italy, Africa, and the western Illyricum. The eldest of these princes was twenty-one, the second twenty, and the third only seventeen years of age when they assumed the reins of government, and condescended to accept from the senate the title of Augustus.

At the decease of Constantine, the throne of the east was filled by Sapor the son of Hormouz, and grandson of Narfes. The ambition of the Persian, to whom even his enemies ascribe the virtues of a statesman and a soldier, was animated by the desire of avenging the disgrace of his fathers, and wresting from the hands of the Romans the five provinces beyond the Tigris. With Tiridates, who had maintained the alliance and espoused the faith of Constantine, expired the prosperity of the Armenian monarchy; his lawful heir was driven into exile, and the christian

A. D. 342.

priests were murdered or expelled by a faction, which refused to abandon their plurality of gods and wives, and opened the gates of their cities to Sapor. Chosroes, the son of Tiridates, after an interval of three years civil dissention, was restored by the imperial authority to the throne of his ancestors; but he consented to purchase the friendship of Sapor by an ignominious tribute and the cession of the province Atropetene, which had been added to Armenia by the courage of Tiridates and the victorious arms of Galerius.

During the whole reign of Constantius, the provinces of the east were afflicted by the calamities of the Persian war. The armies of Rome and Persia encountered each other in nine bloody battles, in two of which Constantius commanded himself in person. In the battle of Singara

A. D. 348.

the Roman legions, by an effort of tumultuous valour, and in despite of the remonstrances of Constantius, forced, and possessed themselves of the Persian camp; but while they were engaged in plunder and dispersed among the tents, the vigilant Sapor, under the shadow of night, advanced upon the conquerors: the fortune of the day was reversed, and the flying remnant of the legions was saved after incredible hardships by a melancholly retreat.

Though nine repeated victories might have exalted the fame of Sapor, yet the advantages from them

them were small, while the fortified cities of Mesopotamia, and above all, Nisibis, remained in the possession of the Romans. In the space of twelve years, Nisibis maintained three memorable sieges against the power of Sapor; in the last, at the head of the united forces of Persia and India, he pressed the attack, and in successive repulses displayed an obstinate firmness, which only yielded to the intelligence that the eastern provinces of Persia were ravaged by an invasion of the Massagetæ. The Scythian war engaged him to conclude a truce with the emperor, equally grateful to both princes, as Constantius, after the death of his two brothers, was involved in a civil contest by the revolutions of the west.

Constantine, the eldest son of the late emperor, complained he was defrauded of his just spoils on their order of Dalmatius and Hannibalianus: from Constans he exacted the cession of the African provinces; but some instances of duplicity during the treaty inflamed his mind, and at the head of a tumultuary band, he broke into the dominions of Constans, and laid waste the country round Aquileia. The measures of Constans, who then resided in Dacia, were directed with more ability: he detached a select and disciplined body of his Illyrian troops, and prepared to follow in person with the remainder of his forces; but the contest

was soon terminated by the conduct of his lieutenants. By the appearance of flight, A. D. 340. March Constantine was betrayed into an ambuscade, and slain with his attendants: his provinces readily transferred their allegiance to the conqueror, who refusing to admit the claims of his elder brother, Constantius, maintained the undisputed possession of more than two-thirds of the Roman empire.

A. D. 350. About ten years afterwards, Constans perished by the hand of a domestic traitor. Magnentius, an ambitious soldier of barbarian extraction, corrupted, by the assistance of Marcellinus, count of the sacred largesses, the chosen bands of Jovians and Herculians. At an entertainment given by Marcellinus to the *illustrious* and *honourable* of the court of Gaul, which then resided at Autun, at a late hour of the night Magnentius entered the apartment invested with the diadem and purple; the guests were surprised into an instant approbation, the guards took the oath of fidelity, the gates were shut, and before dawn Magnentius was master of the troops and treasure of the city of Autun. Though the progress of fame allowed Constans, then hunting in the adjacent forest, a moment for flight, he was overtaken before he could reach a sea port in Spain by a party of light horse, whose chief executed his commission

commission by the murder of the son of Constantine.

The authority of Magnentius was immediately acknowledged by the two great præfectures of Gaul and Italy. The martial countries of Illyricum, from the Danube to the extremity of Greece, obeyed the government of Vetranio, an aged general of experience and reputation in war. He at first gave the strongest assurance of his fidelity to the remaining son of the great Constantine; but his attachment was soon shaken by the ambitious counsels of Constantina, the widow of Hannibalianus, and the sister of Constantius. This aspiring woman, who had received from her father the title of Augusta, placed the diadem on the head of the Illyrian general; and Vetranio, to secure it, contracted with Magnentius an alliance, necessary perhaps but certainly dishonourable.

Constantius on the first news of these important events, desisted from the prosecution of the Persian war; and on his arrival at Heraclea gave audience to the ambassadors of Magnentius and Vetranio. Admonished and encouraged, as he declared, by the shade of his father, to avenge the death of Constans, he rejected all idea of treating with Magnentius; but he agreed to acknowledge Vetranio as his colleague in the empire, provided he renounced the alliance of Magnentius, and appoint-

ed an interview to regulate the future operations of war against the usurper. In consequence of this agreement, Vetricio advanced to Sardica with a force far more numerous than that of Constantius ; but the leaders had already embraced the party of the son of Constantine. The united armies were commanded to assemble in a large plain near the city, and the two emperors were called upon to explain the situation of public affairs. The precedence of rank was yielded to the royal birth of Constantius, who acquitted himself with firmness, dexterity, and eloquence : the officers, instructed to act their parts, affected to be convinced by his oration, and saluted him as their lawful sovereign. The troops caught the enthusiasm of loyalty, and the plains of Sardica resounded with, " Long life " to the son of Constantine." Vetricio, astonished and confounded, prostrated himself at the feet of the conqueror, who raised the aged suppliant from the ground, and permitted him to wear out the remaining six years of his life in ease and affluence in the city of Prusa.

The approaching contest with Magnentius was of a more serious and bloody kind.

A. D. 351.

The fertile plains between the Drave, the Save, and the Danube, presented a spacious theatre for the operations of civil war. During the greater part of the summer, the tyrant of Gaul

Gaul shewed himself master of the field ; he carried by assault the town of Siscia, attacked the city of Sirmium, and cut in pieces a numerous detachment which he had allured into the narrow passes of Adarne. Constantius offered to resign the provinces beyond the Alps. His offer was rejected, and he was insulted with the promise of pardon, if he would instantly abdicate the purple. "That he should confide in the justice of his cause, and the protection of an avenging deity," was the only answer honour would allow the emperor to make.

Magnentius directed his march towards Murfa, set fire to the gates, and had almost scaled the walls, when the approach of Constantius left him no time to continue the assault. The son of Constantine, having animated his soldiers with a speech, retired to a neighbouring church, and committed to his generals the conduct of this decisive day. With various turns of fortune, the engagement was maintained till night, and ended with the defeat of Magnentius, who, after displaying the virtues of a general and soldier, escaped with difficulty the rapid pursuit of the conquerors.

The approach of winter, which deferred the prosecution of the war, scarce allowed Magnentius to fix his residence at Aquileia, before the revolt of
Rome

Rome and Italy, compelled him, with the remains of his forces, to retire beyond the Alps, into the provinces of Gaul. The indiscretion of some detachments that pursued him, enabled him to gratify his revenge, by the carnage of an useless victory.

A. D. 352. It was now the turn of Magnentius to sue in vain, and Constantius was inexorable to his offer of resigning the purple. An imperial fleet had acquired the possession of Africa and Spain; the passages of the Cottian Alps were forced. In the combat of mount Seleucus, the resources of the tyrant were extinguished, the fidelity of his guards was corrupted, and he prevented their design of delivering him up to the victor by falling on his sword. This example of suicide was followed by his brother Decentius; Marcellinus had disappeared in the battle of Mursa; and the public tranquillity was confirmed by executing the survivors of a guilty and unsuccessful faction.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONSTANTIUS SOLE EMPEROR—ELEVATION AND
DEATH OF GALLUS—DANGER AND ELEVATION
OF JULIAN—SARMATIAN AND PERSIAN
WARS—VICTORIES OF JULIAN IN GAUL.

THE divided provinces of the empire were again united by the victory of Constantius; but the triumph of his arms served only to establish the reign of the eunuchs, who alternately governed Constantius by his fears, his indolence, and his vanity. Of these slaves the most distinguished was the chamberlain Eusebius, who ruled the monarch and the palace with absolute sway, and by his artful suggestions persuaded the emperor to add a new crime to the long list of unnatural murders by the condemnation of the unfortunate Gallus.

When the two nephews of Constantine, Gallus and Julian, were saved from the fury of the soldiers, the former was about twelve, and the latter
about

about six years of age. Constantius was sensible that the execution of these helpless orphans would have been esteemed by all mankind, an act of the most deliberate cruelty. Different cities of Ionia and Bithynia were assigned for their exile; but as soon as their growing years excited the jealousy of the emperor, he secured these unhappy youths in the strong castle of Macellum near Cæsarea. Here they pursued their studies, and practised their exercises; but though their numerous household was not unworthy their birth, they could not disguise to themselves that they were deprived of fortune, of freedom, and of safety. At length the emergencies of the state compelled the emperor to invest Gallus with the purple in the twenty-fifth A. D. 351. year of his age, and to cement the political connection by his marriage with the princess Constantina. After a formal interview, and mutually pledging their faith, the two princes repaired to their respective stations. Constantius marched towards the west, and Gallus fixed his residence at Antioch, from whence he administered the five great dioceses of the eastern præfecture. In this change the new Cæsar was not unmindful of his brother Julian, who obtained the honours of his rank, the appearance of liberty, and the restitution of an ample patrimony.

But it soon appeared that Gallus was incapable of exercising with propriety the authority delegated
to

to him. His temper, naturally morose and violent, was soured by solitude and adversity, and his wife Constantina is described as an infernal fury insatiate of human blood. The private houses of Antioch were besieged with spies, every apartment of the palace was adorned with the instruments of death and torture; and the Cæsar forgot while he was depriving himself of the affection of the people, he furnished the emperor with the fairest pretence for exacting the forfeit of his purple and his life.

During the civil war with Magnentius, Constantius dissembled his knowledge of the cruel administration of Gallus; but when the victory was decided in favour of the son of Constantine, it was privately resolved either to deprive Gallus of the purple, or at least remove him from the luxury of Asia to the hardships and dangers of a German war. Two ministers of illustrious rank, Domitian, the Oriental præfect, and Montius, quæstor of the palace, were empowered by a special commission to visit and reform the state of the east. Their instructions were to behave towards Gallus with moderation and respect; but their rashness disappointed these prudent measures, and their insolence hastened their own ruin. The nephew and daughter of Constantine could ill brook the haughty language assumed by these subjects;

jects ; and the Cæsar, exasperated by some violent declarations, asserted his dignity by delivering the præfect and quæstor to the menaced vengeance of his guards : after a thousand insults and wounds inflicted on the unhappy victims, their lifeless bodies were precipitated into the stream of the Orontes.

After so daring an insult on the authority of the emperor, Gallus could only hope for safety in a field of battle ; but he suffered himself to be deceived by the arts of Constantius, who with affected tranquillity imperceptibly recalled the veteran legions, and exhorted the Cæsar by frequent epistles to assist him in the west by his presence, his counsels, and his arms. Gallus had reason to distrust, but he depended on the credit of his wife Constantina, till the unseasonable death of that princess completed his ruin.

After a long delay, the reluctant Cæsar set forward on his journey to the imperial court : from Antioch to Hadrianople he pursued his course with a numerous and stately train ; but at Hadrianople he received a mandate that his retinue should halt in that city, and the Cæsar himself, with only ten post carriages, should hasten to the imperial residence at Milan. All dissimulation was laid aside at Petovio in Pannonia ; he was there arrested by general Barbatio, stripped of the en-
signs

signs of Cæsar, and hurried away to Pola in Istria, a sequestered prison recently polluted with royal blood. An examination by his implacable enemy, the eunuch Eusebius, succeeded; the Cæsar by imputing his criminal designs to the advice of his wife, further exasperated Constantius; the sentence of death was signed, dispatched, and executed; and the nephew of Constantine, A. D. 354. with his hands tied behind, was be- Dec. headed in prison like the vilest malefactor.

Julian, who besides the emperor, alone survived of the numerous posterity of Constantius Chlorus, was involved in the disgrace of Gallus. After seven months confinement in the court of Milan, his life was preserved by the generous friendship and powerful intercession of the empress Eusebia. Athens was assigned by the emperor A. D. 355. as the place for his honourable exile. May

Julian, who had displayed from his early youth a propensity for the learning, manners, and religion of the Greeks, obeyed the orders with pleasure; and in the schools of Athens, established that prepossession in favour of his virtues and talents, which was soon diffused over the Roman world.

The death of Gallus had left Constantius oppressed by the accumulated weight of a great empire. The provinces of Gaul were overwhelmed by a deluge of barbarians; the Sarmatians no longer

longer respected the barrier of the Danube; the Isaurians, descending from their craggy mountains, ravaged the adjacent country; and the Persian monarch, elated by victory, again threatened the peace of Asia. Constantius acknowledged his single strength unequal to such an extent of care and dominion; the advice of the empress Eusebia triumphed over the opposition of the eunuchs, and it was resolved that Julian, after marrying Helena, the sister of Constantius, should be appointed with the title of Cæsar, to reign over the countries beyond the Alps.

Julian, on his arrival at Milan, was received by the empress Eusebia with the tenderness of a sister. Constantius, from his lofty tribunal, announced to the troops under arms, the necessity of naming a Cæsar for the administration of the west; and his own intention, if agreeable to their wishes, of rewarding with the purple the virtues of Julian, who on that day entered into the twenty-fifth year of his age. The troops, as a token of applause, clashed their shields against their knees, while the officers expressed with de-

A. D. 355. cent reserve, their sense of the merits
Nov. 6. of the representative of Constantius.

Julian remained but twenty-four days after his investiture at Milan; but the first months of his Gallic reign might not improperly be termed a
splendid

splendid captivity. His steps were watched, his correspondence intercepted, and of his former domestics, only four were permitted to attend him. The memory of his father, and of his brothers, reminded Julian of his own danger, and his apprehensions were encreased by the recent and unworthy fate of Sylvanus: That general had delivered Gaul from the tyranny of the barbarians, but he fell a victim to the arts of a dexterous informer. The contents of some letters signed by him were erased, and the vacant parchment filled with matters of treasonable import; the fraud was discovered, and the innocence of Sylvanus acknowledged too late. The report of the calumny, and the seizure of his estate, had driven the indignant general into rebellion. After a reign of twenty-eight days, he was assassinated by Ursicinus, a general of equal rank, who joined the standard, A. D. 355, to betray the confidence, of his credu-^{Sept.} lous friend. The soldiers instantly returned to their allegiance, and the flatterers of Constantius celebrated the wisdom of the monarch who had extinguished a civil war without the hazard of a battle.

The protection of the Rhætian frontier, and the persecution of the catholic church, detained Constantius in Italy above eighteen months after the departure of Julian. Before the emperor returned

A. D. 357,
April. into the east, he indulged his pride and curiosity by a visit to the ancient capital. He entered into Rome at the head of a triumphal procession, was lodged in the palace of Augustus, presided in the senate, and harangued the people ; but after a short visit of thirty days, his departure was hastened by the intelligence of the distress and danger of the Illyrian provinces. To perpetuate the memory of his presence, he commanded the largest of the Egyptian obelisks, which had been designed by Constantine to adorn his new city, to be transported from the Banks of the Nile, and elevated in the great Circus of Rome.

The distractions of civil war, and the loss which the legions sustained in the battle of Murfa, had exposed the Illyrian provinces to the inroads of the barbarians, particularly the Quadi, a power-

A. D. 357, 358, 359. ful nation, who seemed to have exchanged the institutions of Germany for the arms and military arts of their Sarmatian allies. The emperor passed the Danube on a bridge of boats, penetrated into the heart of the country of the Quadi, and severely retaliated the calamities they had inflicted on the Roman province. The dismayed barbarians sued for peace, and the camp of Constantius was crowded with the princes and ambassadors of the most distant

tant tribes, who courted his protection or implored his clemency. While the emperor gave laws to the nations beyond the Danube, policy and compassion determined him to restore the Sarmatian exiles; and he declared his resolution to exterminate the Limigantes, whose manners were still infected with the vices of their servile origin. But this design was attended with considerable difficulty, and even the person of Constantius was endangered by the frauds of the barbarians. Under the pretence of submission, they were permitted to approach the imperial throne, to learn from the emperor their fate. At a certain signal of defiance, they rushed with fury towards Constantius; his faithful guards, who died at his feet, allowed him a moment to mount a swift horse, and escape from the confusion. The discipline and number of the Romans retrieved the day, and the combat was terminated by the extinction of the name and nation of the Limigantes. The free Sarmatians were reinstated in their former seats, and Zizais, one of the noblest of their chiefs, received from Constantius the title of King.

During these operations, the Roman emperor and Persian monarch preserved with each other a precarious truce, or maintained a languid war. The claim of Sapor to the provinces of Armenia and Mesopotamia was rejected by Constantius,

and the son of Hormouz prepared to extort by force, what he in vain had endeavoured to acquire by negotiation.

With an army of more than one hundred thousand men, Sapor passed the Euphrates, near the head where the infant river is a shallow and accessible stream. Nisibis, he overlooked with disdain. As he passed under the walls of Amida, a random dart which struck against his tiara, convinced him how vain were his hopes to awe that city into an immediate surrender, by the majesty of his presence. Grumbates, the aged king of the Chionites, and the ally of Sapor, advanced against the walls the following day; his demand of instant submission was answered by an arrow from a balista, which pierced the heart of his only son. The grief of the father was alleviated by the promise of Sapor, that the city of Amida should serve as a funeral pile for the youth.

Amida, after long sustaining the united effects of force and stratagem, yielded at length to the more certain operations of a regular siege. A large breach was made by the battering ram, and the garrison, wasted by the sword and disease, was overwhelmed by the fury of the assault. Excepting a few who escaped at the opposite gate, the soldiers, the citizens, their wives and their children, were involved by the conquerors in one promiscuous massacre.

But

But the destruction of Amida was the safety of the Roman provinces ; in the chastisement of a single city, Sapor had lost the most favourable season for conquest, with thirty thousand of his bravest veterans. He returned to his capital with affected triumph and secret mortification : His barbarian allies relinquished a war, in which they encountered such unexpected difficulties. The strength with which the Persian monarch took the field in the ensuing spring, was no longer equal to his ambition, and he was forced to content himself with the reduction of Singara and Bezabde, two fortified cities of Mesopotamia ; A. D. 360. the first he dismantled, but carefully restored the works of the last, and fixed in it a garrison of veterans. Towards the close of the campaign, the arms of Sapor incurred some disgrace by an unsuccessful enterprise against Virtha or Tecrit, a strong fortress of the independent Arabs.

The defence of the east, against the arms of Sapor, required the abilities of a consummate general ; but Urficinus, whose military merit was acknowledged, was recalled, to make room for Sabinian, a weak, infirm, but wealthy veteran. By the same inconstant councils, Urficinus was again dispatched to the frontier of Mesopotamia, to behold the desolation of a country he was not per-

mitted to protect. Every bold measure that he proposed was restrained by the timid and envious Sabinian; and Constantius soon experienced the truth of the prediction, that as long as such maxims prevailed, he would find it no easy task to defend his eastern dominions from the invasion of a foreign enemy. The emperor, after his return from the Danube, proceeded by slow marches into the east, and formed with a powerful army the siege of Bezabde; but when the garrison was reduced to the last extremity, the approach of the rainy season compelled him to retire into his winter-quarters at Antioch.

In the fury of civil discord, Constantius had abandoned the countries of Gaul to the barbarians of Germany. A swarm of Franks and Alemanni was invited by presents and promises to cross the Rhine; but the emperor soon lamented the difficulty of dismissing these new allies, who, regardless of the distinction of loyalty and rebellion, pillaged, and for the most part reduced to ashes, forty-five flourishing cities, besides towns and villages. The Germans fixed their independent habitations on the banks of the Rhine, the Moselle, and the Meuse; the Alemanni established themselves in the modern countries of Alsace and Lorraine; and the Franks occupied the island of the Batavians with a considerable district of Brabant. The diminished

minished legions, destitute of pay and provisions, of arms and discipline, trembled at the approach, and the very name of the barbarians.

Under these melancholy circumstances an unexperienced youth was appointed to govern the provinces of Gaul. The education of Julian had rendered him more conversant with books than arms; but the habits of temperance recommended in the schools, were admirably suited to the discipline of a camp; and the eloquence he had practised might excite or assuage the passions of an armed multitude. At Vienna, where he passed an anxious winter, the Cæsar was informed of the siege and deliverance of Autun by the generous resolution of a few veterans. In his march from Autun through the Gallic provinces, A. D. 356. Julian seized the earliest opportunity of displaying his valour; but the enterprises of his first campaign served less to deliver the oppressed country than to signalize his own courage; and no sooner was he retired into winter-quarters at Sens, than he was besieged by a host of Germans. The intrepidity of the prince compensated for the deficiencies of the place and garrison, and at the end of thirty days the barbarians were compelled to retire.

The abilities of Julian had not only to struggle with foreign but domestic enemies. Marcellus, master-general of the cavalry, had restrained the

troops under his command, from marching to the relief of Sens. The Cæsar complained; Marcellus was removed; and Severus, an officer of approved courage and fidelity, appointed in his room. By the interest of his patroness Eusebia, Julian at length obtained the supreme command over the armies of Gaul. A judicious plan of operations was formed for the approaching campaign; Julian, at the head of the veteran bands and some new levies, penetrated into the centre of the German cantonments, and re-established the fortifications of Saverne, an important post, to check the incursions or intercept the retreat of the enemy: at the same time, Barbatio, general of the infantry, passed the Rhine at the head of thirty thousand men. It was reasonable to expect the Alemanni, pressed on every side, would have evacuated the provinces of Gaul to defend their native country; but these hopes were defeated by the incapacity or treachery of Barbatio. That he permitted a troop of barbarians to pass with impunity before the gates of his camp, may be imputed to his want of abilities; but his burning a number of boats, and a stock of provisions, which would have been of essential service to the army of Gaul, was an evidence of his criminal intention; and his ignominious retreat left Julian to extricate himself from

a situation,

a situation, where he could neither remain with safety, nor retire with honour.

As-soon as the Alemanni were delivered from the fears of invasion, they passed the Rhine to overwhelm the small and feeble band commanded by Julian. The army of the barbarians, led on by the fierce Chnodomar, consisted of thirty-five thousand of the bravest warriors of the tribes of Germany. The troops which remained with the Cæsar in the camp near Strasburgh exceeded not thirteen thousand men, yet Julian determined to seek the enemy, and preferred a general engagement to the uncertain operation of intercepting the dispersed parties of the Alemanni. The day was far spent before they appeared in sight of the barbarian host, and the commencement of the action had nearly proved fatal to the hopes of the empire; the right wing of the Romans was broke, but the fugitives were stopped and rallied by the presence and authority of Julian: after an obstinate conflict between the strength and fierceness of the Germans and the discipline and temper of the Romans, the victory of Julian was attested by the slaughter of six thousand Alemanni, and the captivity of Chnodomar himself. The vanquished king of the Alemanni was sent to prostrate himself before the the emperor; but the impatient barbarian, though he experienced an honourable treatment, could not
long

long survive his defeat, his confinement, and his exile.

After Julian had repulsed the Alemanni, he turned his arms against the Franks. In the month of December, which followed the battle of Strasburgh, he attacked a body of six hundred, who had thrown themselves into two castles on the Meuse. In the midst of this severe season, they sustained a siege of fifty-four days, till exhausted by hunger, and hopeless of escape, the Franks, for the first time, consented to dispense with the ancient law, which commanded them to conquer or to die. The Cæsar sent his captives to the court of Constantius, who accepted them as a valuable present, and added them to the choicest troops of his domestic guards.

The obstinate resistance of this small band, apprised Julian of the difficulties he must expect to meet in his expedition against the whole nation.

A. D. 358. But his rapid diligence surprised and astonished the barbarians; he suddenly pitched his camp before Tongres, while the enemy supposed him in his winter quarters at Paris. The terror and success of his arms soon induced the suppliant tribes to implore the clemency, and to obey the commands of their conqueror. A treaty was concluded, and ratified by solemn oaths; and perpetual inspectors were appointed to reside among

mong the Franks, with the authority of enforcing the strict observance of the conditions.

It was not enough for Julian to have delivered the provinces of Gaul from the barbarians of Germany, he aspired to emulate the glory of the most illustrious of conquerors; and in three successful expeditions, he carried the Roman Eagles beyond the Rhine. Without A. D. repeating the uniform tale of slaughter- 357, 358, 359. and devastation, it is sufficient to observe, that when the Cæsar last repassed that river, he was followed by twenty thousand captives, whom he had rescued from the chains of the barbarians.

As soon as the valour and conduct of Julian had secured an interval of peace, he applied himself to repair the cities of Gaul, and restore the fortifications which had suffered from the inroads of the barbarians; by large importations of corn from Britain, he provided for the subsistence of the inhabitants and garrisons. The leisure of his winter quarters was devoted to the offices of civil government. Superior to the last temptation of virtuous minds, an indiscreet zeal for justice, he restrained the warmth of an advocate, who prosecuted for extortion the president of the Narbonese province. "Who will ever be found guilty," exclaimed the vehement Delphidius, "if it is enough to deny?" "And who," replied Julian, "will

“ will ever be innocent, if it is sufficient to affirm ?” But Constantius allowed not the virtues of Julian to defraud him of any part of the tribute which he extorted from an oppressed country. The prince, though invested with the ensign of royalty, could only correct the rapacious insolence of inferior agents. The management of the finances was entrusted to Florentinus, præfect of Gaul, a tyrant without pity or remorse, who bore with impatience the most gentle opposition of Julian. The Cæsar had rejected a mandate for the levy of an extraordinary tax; and the faithful picture of the public misery, by which he had been obliged to justify his refusal, offended the court of Constantius. Yet in this dependent and precarious situation, the humanity of Julian continued to alleviate and pity the distress of the people; and though he could not revive the martial spirit of the Romans, or introduce the arts of industry among their savage enemies, the victories of the Cæsar suspended for a short time the inroads of the barbarians, and delayed the ruin of the western world.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEGAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH—
DISTRACTED STATE OF THE CHURCH AND EMPIRE
UNDER CONSTANTINE AND HIS SONS.

IN considering the public establishment of christianity, a difficulty arises of a very unexpected nature; that of ascertaining the precise date of the conversion of Constantine. From the discordant authorities of various writers, we may conclude the emperor, by gradual degrees, declared himself the protector, and at length the proselyte of the church. Whatever symptoms of christian belief might transpire in the private discourses of Constantine, till he was near forty years of age he persevered in the practice of the established religion, and his devotion was more peculiarly directed towards the sun, the apollo of Greek and Roman mythology.

While Constantine exercised a limited authority over Gaul, he was content to protect his christian subjects; but after the conquest of Italy, he made an authentic

thentic declaration of his sentiments by the edict of Milan, which was subscribed by Licinius, and restored to the christians those civil and religious rights of which they had been deprived.

The motives of Constantine, in patronizing the church, may not only be accounted for by his esteem for the moral character of the christians, and the purity of their system, but may in part be ascribed to the doctrine of passive obedience, so acceptable to a sovereign, and so strenuously inculcated and so constantly practised during the three first centuries of christianity. The mind of the emperor might also be flattered with the idea of divine right; he might consider the sword and sceptre as committed to his hands by the same favour which had placed them in those of Moses, of Joshua, of Gideon, and of David. Nor could Constantine be insensible to the warm and active loyalty of the church, which exerted on his side every effort of human industry; the regular correspondence which connected the bishops of the most distant provinces, enabled them to transmit every intelligence which could serve the cause of an emperor, who avowed himself the protector of the church.

But the choice of Constantine, in favour of the christian religion, is reported to have been determined by a dream or a prodigy. A contemporary author asserts, that Constantine, the night which preceded the last battle against Maxentius, was admo-

admonished in a dream to inscribe the shields of his soldiers with the *celestial sign of God*, and that his obedience was rewarded by the victory of the Milvian Bridge; but Eusebius affirms, that in one of his marches the emperor with his whole army beheld in the sky the luminous trophy of the cross, inscribed with the following words, “BY THIS
“CONQUER,” and that his faith was confirmed by the vision of the ensuing night, in which he received an assurance of victory over Maxentius. The prodigy perhaps supplied the design of the *labarum*, the principal standard, which displayed the triumph of the cross, and animated the soldiers of christianity.

The mysteries of the christian faith were concealed from strangers, and even from those in the first rudiments of its doctrine; but the rules of discipline were relaxed in favour of the imperial proselyte: yet the policy of Constantine suspended the ceremony of baptism till the approach of death, and he cautiously postponed the expiation of sin till he was past all danger of relapse.

The example of the emperor, with the hopes of wealth and honours, soon diffused the christian religion among the obsequious crowds which fill the apartments of a palace. The conversion of those who possessed birth, power, or riches, was soon followed by dependent multitudes. The Goths
and

and Germans, who enlisted under the standard of Rome, revered the cross which glittered at the head of the legions; and their fierce countrymen received at the same time the lessons of faith and humanity. The kings of Iberia and Armenia worshipped the God of their protector, and the labour of the missionaries extended the knowledge of the gospel to the distant coast of India: the faint murmurs of the Pagans were silenced by a military force, and the irresistible power of the Roman emperors was displayed in the important change of the national religion.

The office of supreme pontiff had been united by Augustus to the imperial dignity: but in the christian church, the service of the altar was entrusted to consecrated priests; and the monarch, whose spiritual rank was less honourable than that of the meanest deacon, was seated below the rails of the sanctuary, and confounded with the faithful multitude. The same marks of respect which Constantine had paid to saints and confessors, were soon exacted by the episcopal order; and a secret conflict between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions was introduced, and embarrassed the operations of the Roman government.

The catholic church was administered by the spiritual and legal establishment of eighteen hundred bishops: these were chosen by the free suffra-

ges

ges of the people ; but should the vacant see be allotted by popular choice to an unworthy candidate, the other bishops might refuse to ordain the object of their caprice. The bishops alone possessed the power of selecting the proper characters for priesthood, and each bishop acquired an absolute right to the obedience of the clerk whom he ordained. The whole body of the catholic clergy, more numerous perhaps than the legions, was exempted by the emperors from all service, private or public, from all municipal offices, and all personal taxes and contributions which pressed on their fellow-citizens with intolerable weight.

The edict of Milan secured the revenue as well as the peace of the church ; but the ecclesiastical order was still supported or enriched by the voluntary oblations of the faithful. Eight years after the edict of Milan, Constantine granted to his subjects the permission of bequeathing their fortunes to the catholic church, but the patrimony of it was still burthened with all the public impositions of the state. Some partial exemptions might be obtained by the clergy of Rome, Alexandria, &c. but these were few, and granted with caution.

Though the Latin clergy have accepted as the gift of Constantine, the independent jurisdiction

VOL. I.

U

which

which was the fruit of time, of accident, and of their own industry, yet the liberality of the christian emperors actually endowed them with some legal prerogatives. I. Under a despotic government the bishops alone enjoyed the inestimable privilege of being tried by their peers. II. The domestic jurisdiction of the bishops withdrew, from the cognizance of a secular judge, those civil causes which concerned the ecclesiastical order; but where the crime of the clergy could not be sufficiently expiated by degradation, the Roman magistrate drew the sword of justice without any regard to their immunities. III. The arbitration of the bishops was ratified by a positive law, and the judges were instructed to execute the episcopal decrees. IV. The ancient privilege of sanctuary was transferred to the christian temples, and the lives and fortunes of the most eminent subjects might be protected by the mediation of the bishop.

The bishop was the perpetual censor of the morals of his people. The discipline of penance was digested into a system of canonical jurisprudence, which accurately defined the duty of confession, the degrees of guilt, and the measure of punishment; and though the person of the emperor was respected from prudence, loyalty, and fear, the spiritual censors regarded not the dignity

nity of any other station, but insensibly prepared the triumph of the Roman pontiffs, who have trampled on the necks of kings.

The freedom of public preaching was another source of authority to the church. The sacred orator from the pulpit might invade the ears of the monarch with the harsh sound of popular eloquence; the privilege of legislative assemblies contributed to add dignity to the ecclesiastical order; but the convocation of great and extraordinary synods was the prerogative of the emperor alone. During the reign of Constantine, three hundred and eighteen bishops were convened at Nice to determine some disputes respecting the Trinity, and the monarch himself, admitted into the council, listened with patience and debated with modesty.

A. D. 325.

Constantine had scarcely announced general Toleration to the Roman world, when he proclaimed the intended destruction of those sects which dissented from the catholic church. A double election in the church of Carthage divided the provinces of Africa, and gave birth to the schism of the Donatists: but the more diffusive mischief of the Trinitarian controversy successively penetrated into every part of the christian world. Three imperfect systems were formed by the human understanding, concerning the nature of the

divine Trinity. I. Arianism, derived from Arius, who, with his disciples, maintained the Son of God to be essentially different from the Father; and that the Son was the Word, but denied that Word to have been eternal. Tritheism, which admitted three persons in the godhead, but of three substances, and of three essences. Sabellianism, which reduced the whole Trinity to the person of the Father, making the Word and the holy Spirit only emanations.

Constantine at first regarded the object in dispute with great indifference; in an epistle addressed to Alexander and Arius, he terms the distinction inconsiderable, and recommends to the clergy of Alexandria the example of the Greek philosophers, who could maintain their arguments without losing their temper. But when he afterwards presided in the council of Nice, he ratified the creed of that synod, embraced the orthodox party with warmth, banished Arius into one of the remote provinces of Illyricum, condemned his writings to the flames, and denounced a capital punishment against those in whose possession they should be found.

Three years were scarcely elapsed from the council of Nice, before Arius was recalled; his faith was approved by the synod of Jerusalem, and the emperor issued an absolute command that he

he should be solemnly admitted to the communion in the cathedral of Constantinople. On the same day which had been fixed for the triumph of Arius, he expired. But the emperor remained attached to the opinion of the deceased presbyter, and banished into distant provinces the three principal leaders of the catholics, Athanasius of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, and Paul of Constantinople.

Constantius adopted the sentiments of his father; like him, he employed the arms of power in the cause of Arianism, and disgraced his reign by the unjust and ineffectual persecution of the great Athanasius. The immortal name of that man will never be separated from the catholic doctrine of the Trinity, and the forty-six years he was seated on the archiepiscopal throne of Egypt, was spent in a perpetual combat against the power of Arianism. Five times was Athanasius expelled from his throne, twenty years he passed as an exile or fugitive; and almost every province of the Roman empire was successively witness to his merit and his sufferings. Amidst the storm of persecution, the archbishop of Alexandria was patient of labour, jealous of fame, careless of safety, and, though his mind was tainted by the contagion of fanaticism, he displayed a superiority of character and abilities, which would have quali-

fied him far better than the degenerate sons of Constantine, for the government of a great monarchy. When last he fled before the menaced vengeance of Constantius, he eluded the pursuit of the civil and military powers, which were assiduously exerted to oppress him, by retiring to the deserts of Thebais.

These deserts were then peopled by a race of wild fanatics, who preferred the commands of their abbot to the laws of their sovereign. They collected every word which dropt from his lips as the genuine effusion of inspired wisdom, and triumphed in the dangers which they braved in the defence of truth and innocence. When their dark retreats were invaded by a military force, which it was impossible to resist, they silently stretched out their necks to the executioner; and supported their national character, that torture could never wrest from an Egyptian, the confession of a secret which he had resolved not to disclose.

The importance of maintaining a more intimate connection with the catholic party, tempted Athanasius sometimes to introduce himself into Alexandria. His adventures in these enterprises were extraordinary and romantic; he was once secreted in a dry cistern, which he had scarcely left before he was betrayed by the treachery of a female slave; and once he was concealed in a still

more

more uncommon asylum, the house of a virgin, only twenty years of age, and who was celebrated in the whole city for her exquisite beauty; but whenever the pursuit became more diligent, Athanasius retired to the deserts, and the protection of his faithful monks, who served him as guards, as secretaries, and as messengers. From the depth of his inaccessible retreat, the intrepid primate waged an incessant and offensive war against the protector of the Arians, and his seasonable writings contributed to unite and animate the orthodox party. In his public apologies addressed to the emperor, whilst he affected moderation, he exposed Constantius as a weak and wicked prince, the executioner of his family, the tyrant of the republic, and the anti-christ of the church. The son of Constantine, in the height of his prosperity, received from the hand of the primate a wound which he could neither heal nor revenge; and was the first of christian princes who experienced the strength of those principles, which, in the cause of religion, could resist the most violent exertions of the civil power.

The blind violence of Arianism in the persecution of Athanasius, and of so many respectable bishops, introduced into the Roman government new causes of tyranny and sedition; and under the reign of the sons of Constantine, the two capitals,

Rome and Constantinople, were shaken by religious discord, and polluted with blood in the fury of ecclesiastical contest. In the new capital, Hermogenes, master-general of the cavalry, had enforced a sentence of banishment against Paul, an orthodox priest, who claimed the throne of that city; but the execution of it was fatal to this commander: the catholics rose in defence of their bishop; the palace of Hermogenes was consumed; the first military officer of the empire was dragged by the heels through the streets of Constantinople, and after he expired his corpse was exposed to their wanton insults.

The disposition of Constantius, always cruel and arbitrary, was justly exasperated by the tumults of his capital, and the criminal behaviour of a faction, who opposed the authority and religion of their sovereign. The punishments of death, exile, and confiscation were inflicted with rigour. By an edict of Constantius against the Catholics, those who refused to communicate with the Arian bishops were deprived of the immunities of ecclesiastics, and of the rights of christians; and the provinces of Thrace and Asia were invaded and depopulated by the arms of the legions, to support or extend the dominion of Arianism.

Though Constantine invited and exhorted, in the most pressing terms, the subjects of the Roman

man empire to imitate the example of their master; yet he declared that those who still refused to open their eyes to the celestial light, might freely enjoy their temples and their fancied gods: but, without violating the sanctity of his promise, the artful monarch sapped the foundation of the ancient religion. An ignominious silence was imposed on the oracles, which had been publicly convicted of fraud and falsehood; the arts of divination were condemned under the most rigorous penalties; the statues of the gods were transported to adorn the collections of the curious; and the sacred property of the opulent temples of Greece and Asia was confiscated. The sons of Constantine proceeded in his steps with more zeal, but with less discretion; and the demolition of the temples was celebrated as one of the auspicious events of the reign of Constans and Constantius. Yet the divisions of christianity suspended the ruin of Paganism; the hostile sects were unwilling to exasperate a powerful though declining party; the ancient religion of Rome was still revered by a numerous people, less attached to it by principle than custom; and the hopes of the Polytheist were revived by the well-grounded confidence, that the presumptive heir of the empire had secretly embraced the religion of his ancestors.

CHAPTER XV.

JULIAN IS DECLARED EMPEROR BY THE LEGIONS OF
GAUL—HIS MARCH AND SUCCESS—THE DEATH
OF CONSTANTIUS — CIVIL ADMINISTRA-
TION OF JULIAN — RELIGION OF JU-
LIAN — HIS ATTEMPTS TO RE-
STORE THE PAGAN WORSHIP.

WHILE the Romans languished under the tyranny of eunuchs and bishops, the praise of Julian was repeated in every part of the empire. The barbarians of Germany dreaded the Cæsar, whose valour they had experienced; the soldiers extolled the leader, beneath whose banners they had conquered; the grateful provincials acknowledged their country delivered from the ravages of the enemy: but Constantius dreaded the virtues he ought to have imitated, and the favourites decried the disposition of a prince indifferent to pleasure, and averse to luxury. The mind of the emperor, conscious that the applause of his subjects accom-
panied

panied the merits of the Cæsar, was prepared to receive the poison of those sycophants, who coloured their envious intentions with the appearances of truth and candour. They exaggerated the fame, talents, and services of Julian; but they insinuated these might be converted into dangerous crimes, if the inconstant multitude should prefer their inclinations to their duty. The dread of a successful general at the head of a victorious army was constantly inculcated; and the personal fears of Constantius were considered as a laudable anxiety for the public safety.

The alarming state of the eastern frontier and the tranquillity of Gaul, afforded a specious opportunity of withdrawing the veteran legions from the latter province, and of disarming the Cæsar. While Julian was employed in the administration of justice in his winter-quarters at Paris, he was surprised by the arrival of a tribune A. D. 360, and a notary, furnished with orders April. from the emperor, to which the Cæsar was commanded to submit. These commissioners were to detach, with the four entire legions, called the Celtæ, the Petulants, the Heruli, and the Batavians, three hundred of the bravest youths from each of the remaining bands; and diligently to hasten the march of this formidable force, that it might arrive on the frontiers of Persia before the opening of the campaign.

Julian

Julian foresaw and lamented the consequences of this fatal mandate. Most of the auxiliaries, when they engaged, had stipulated that they should not be obliged to pass the Alps; the faith of Rome and the honour of the prince were pledged for the observance of this condition: the confidence of the warriors of Germany, who considered truth as the noblest of virtues, would be lost by this act of treachery. The legionaries indeed were enlisted for the general defence of the empire; but attached by birth or habit to the climate and manners of Gaul, they admired Julian, they despised the emperor, and they dreaded the laborious march and burning toils of a Persian war. They pleaded the more immediate duty of defending their friends and families, and the dread that the moment the provinces were exhausted of their strength, the Germans would violate a treaty which had been imposed on their fears.

Though Julian well knew if he complied with the orders he had received, he subscribed to his own destruction, and that of the people he governed, yet a positive refusal would be construed into an act of rebellion, and be considered as a declaration of war; the inexorable jealousy of the emperor, the peremptory nature of his commands, left not any room for apology, or even a candid interpretation. His faithful Sallust, by whose counsels he might have profited, had been
removed

removed by the malice of the eunuchs ; Lupicinus, the general of the cavalry, was engaged in protecting Britain from the inroads of the Scots and Picts ; Florentius was occupied at Vienna ; and that crafty statesman, declining to advise on so dangerous an occasion, eluded the representation of Julian, who repeatedly requested the presence of the præfect. The solicitations of the imperial messengers were rude and importunate ; and the Cæsar, unable to resist, and unwilling to comply, expressed his wish and intention of resigning the purple.

The indignant feelings of the prince at length gave way to the submissive duties of the subject, and Julian issued his orders for carrying into execution the commands of Constantius. A part of the troops began their march for the Alps, and the detachments from the garrisons moved towards their respective places of assembly. The crouds of affrighted provincials, as they advanced, implored their protection ; and the wives of the soldiers accused their desertion in the language of grief and indignation. The discontent of an armed multitude is seldom long concealed ; their murmurs were communicated from tent to tent ; and a libel dispersed, which painted in glowing colours the disgrace of the Cæsar, the oppression of the Gallic army, and the vices of the tyrant of Asia.

The

The ministers of Constantius were alarmed and astonished ; yet they rejected the honest advice of Julian, who suggested the danger of the troops marching through Paris, and the temptation of a last interview.

On the approach of the troops the Cæsar went out to meet them ; from his tribunal he gratefully celebrated their past exploits, and admonished them that the commands of Augustus required an instant and cheerful obedience. The soldiers listened in obstinate silence, and after a short pause were dismissed to their quarters ; the officers were entertained by Julian, and when they retired from the feast, lamented the hardship of their fate, which tore them from their beloved general and their native country. The troops had been indulged with wine ; the opportunity was favourable ; and conspiracy, the only expedient which could avert their separation, was proposed and approved. At the hour of midnight, the impatient multitude rushed into the suburbs, encompassed the palace, and pronounced the irrevocable words *Julian Augustus*. The prince, by securing the doors, endeavoured to seclude his person from their tumultuary attachment ; but at the dawn of day the soldiers forcibly entered the palace, seized with respectful violence the person of Julian, placed him on his tribunal, and with loud shouts saluted him emperor.

Till

Till the third hour of the day, the inflexible Cæsar sustained their prayers, their reproaches, their menaces; he entreated them not to fully the fame of their victories by the crime of rebellion; he undertook to procure from the emperor a free and gracious pardon, and even the revocation of the orders which had excited their resentment. He was answered, that if he wished to live he must consent to reign; he was exalted on a shield, a military collar supplied the want of a diadem, and after the ceremony was performed, Julian retired to the palace overwhelmed with apparent grief.

The first days of the reign of the new emperor were devoted to a variety of cares; he moderated the zeal of his party, protected the persons of his enemies, and defeated the secret enterprises formed against his life and dignity. Though he was firmly resolved to maintain the station he had assumed, yet he wished to save his country from the calamities of civil war, and to avoid a contest with Constantius. For this purpose, he composed in his own name, and that of the army, a respectful epistle; in which he acknowledged the irregularity of his election, allowed the supremacy of Constantius, engaged to recruit his army with a select number of barbarians, and to accept from his choice a Prætorian præfect; but he reserves to himself

himself the sovereignty of the provinces beyond the Alps, with the nomination of all other officers, the command of the troops, and the regulation of the finances.

Preparations for war accompanied the negotiations for peace. The army was immediately recruited and augmented; and as soon as the season of the year permitted Julian to take the field, he threw a bridge over the Rhine, and prepared to chastise the perfidy of the Attuarii, a tribe of the Franks, who had taken advantage of these commotions and ravaged the frontiers of the empire. Julian conquered as soon as he penetrated into the country, and after he had given peace to the barbarians, he surveyed the fortifications along the Rhine, and fixed his head-quarters at Vienna for the ensuing winter. Vandomair, a prince of the Alemanni, threatened the state with a dangerous war; the policy of Julian secured the barbarian, who in the character of a friend, had incautiously accepted an invitation from the Roman governors: before the Germans were recovered from their amazement, the emperor crossed the Rhine, and renewed the impressions of terror which had been made in four preceding expeditions.

The ambassadors of Julian, in their passage through Italy and Illyricum, were detained by the affected delays of the provincial governors, and
were

were at length introduced into the presence of the eastern emperor; they found him, from the dispatches of his own officers, prepossessed against the conduct of Julian, and of the Gallic army; his gestures and language expressed the disorder of his soul: the death of Helena had dissolved the domestic connection between Julian and Constantius; and the empress Eusebia, who, to the last, retained her regard for the former, and might have moderated the resentment of the latter prince, was unfortunately no more; the son of Constantine was abandoned to his own passions, and to the arts of the eunuchs. The terror of foreign invasion, compelled him to continue his march towards the confines of Persia; and he signified to Julian, as the only conditions on which that prince, or his followers, might hope for clemency, that the Cæsar should renounce the rank of Augustus, and descend to his former station of a dependent minister; that he should vest the powers of the army and state in officers appointed by the imperial court, and for his safety rely on the word of Epictetus, a Gallic bishop and Arian favourite of Constantius.

When Julian perceived his moderate demands served to irritate the pride of his adversary, he boldly resolved to commit his life and fortune to the chance of civil war. The haughty epistle of

Constantius was read before a military audience; and the faint proposal of Julian to resign the purple, if he could obtain the consent of his electors, was drowned in the repeated acclamations of Julian Augustus. A part of the letter which upbraided Julian with ingratitude to the emperor, who had preserved him in his infancy when he was left an helpless orphan, awakened the indignation of that prince. "An orphan," interrupted Julian; "Does the assassin of my family reproach me that I was left an orphan? He urges me to revenge those injuries, which I have long studied to forget." The assembly was dismissed; Leonas, the quæstor of Constantius, after being saved with difficulty from the popular fury, was sent back to his master with an epistle which expressed the sentiments of contempt, of hatred, and of resentment; and Julian, after this message, declared he committed his safety to the IMMORTAL GODS, and thus publicly renounced the religion, as well as the friendship of the son of Constantine.

The circumstances of the emperor of Gaul required vigorous and immediate exertions; by intercepted letters, he discovered the barbarians had been invited to invade the provinces of the west. But the imperial legions were still in Asia: the Danube was feebly guarded; and if Julian could occupy,

occupy, by a sudden incursion, the important provinces of Illyricum, he might expect from them a supply of hardy soldiers; while the rich mines would contribute to support the expences of war. He proposed the enterprize to the assembly of the soldiers, who devoted themselves with horrid imprecations to the service of their leader, and declared they would follow him to the extremities of Europe or Asia. Nebridius, the Prætorian præfect, singly opposed this engagement; after the loss of his hand by the stroke of a sword, he was protected by Julian from the fury of the armed multitude: he was dismissed to his own house; and his high office was bestowed on Sallust, the friend and faithful minister of the new emperor.

The success of Julian depended more on the celerity of his motions, than the number of his troops. He assembled and divided his
A. D. 361.

army in the neighbourhood of Basil; one division, consisting of ten thousand men, was directed, under the command of Nevitta, to advance through Rhætia and Noricum. A similar body, led by Jovius and Jovinus, was ordered to follow the course of the highways, through the Alps and the northern confines of Italy. The instructions to the generals were, to hasten their march, to spread the opinion of their strength, and to join their sovereign under the walls of Sirmium.

For himself, Julian reserved a more difficult part; with three thousand volunteers he plunged into the recesses of the Marcian forest, and for many days the fate of the young hero was unknown to the world. The secrecy of his march, his diligence, and vigour, surmounted every obstacle; and at length he emerged, between Ratibon and Vienna, at the place where he designed to embark his troops. He seized a light fleet of Brigantine, secured a supply of coarse provisions, and committed himself and his followers to the rapid stream of the Danube. A favourable wind, and the labours of his mariners, who incessantly plied their oars, carried his fleet in eleven days above seven hundred miles; before his enemies could receive certain intelligence of his having left the banks of the Rhine, he landed at Bononia, only nineteen miles from Sirmium.

The military powers of Illyricum were commanded by Lucilian, who, perplexed by doubtful reports, slowly began to collect the scattered troops of his government; but before he could assemble any considerable force, he was surprised by Dagalaiphus, an active officer, whom Julian had pushed forwards for that purpose as soon as he landed at Bononia. Lucilian was conducted to the emperor; but no sooner did he understand with what an inconsiderable detachment that prince had ventured

ventured on so important an enterprize, than he indiscreetly censured the rashness of the conqueror. "Reserve," replied Julian, with a smile of contempt, "these timid remonstrances for your master Constantius; when I gave you my pleasure to kiss, I received you not as a counsellor, but as a suppliant." Sirmium, the most populous city of the Illyrian provinces, submitted to the victorious emperor; and Julian, after devoting two days to the public joy and the games of the circus, on the morning of the third marched to occupy the pass of Succi, which mid-way between Sirmium and Constantinople, separates the provinces of Thrace and Dacia. This important post was entrusted to the brave Nevitta, who, as well as the generals Jovius and Jovinus, had successfully effected the junction with their master.

From his head-quarters at Sirmium, Julian distributed an apology for his conduct to the principal cities of the empire, and endeavoured to maintain the merits of his cause by arguments as well as arms. His application to Rome was communicated to the senate by Tertullus, præfect of the city: that assembly allowed the claims of the master of Italy without a dissenting voice; but in return to his invective against Constantius, they unanimously exclaimed, "Respect, we beseech you, the author of your own fortune." An art-

ful expression, which might be considered as the reproof of ingratitude, or the flattering confession that the former preservation of Julian ought to atone for the faults of Constantius.

The retreat of Sapor allowed Constantius to attend to the rapid progress of his rival, whose competition he affected to mention with undeviating contempt. He professed his intention of returning to Europe, and chastising the guilt and rashness of the Cæsar; and assured his army, if the mutineers of Gaul presumed to meet them in the field, they never would be able to sustain the fire from their eyes, and the irresistible terror of their shouts. A party was detached to secure, if possible, the important pass of Succì, and the magazines prepared against Sapor were appropriated to the service of civil war.

The partisans of Constantius were inspired with the most sanguine assurances of success; Gaudentius had occupied in his name the provinces of Africa, and intercepted the subsistence of Rome. The distress of Julian was augmented by the revolt of two legions; these had submitted to him at Sirmium, but as Julian justly apprehended they were attached to Constantius, he had detached them from the scene of action, under pretence of protecting the defenceless frontier of Gaul. The troops advanced with reluctance as far as the con-

fines

finer of Italy ; but halting near Aquileia, at the instigation of one of their tribunes they seized that important city, and erected on the walls of it the standard of Constantius. Julian, sensible of the extent of the mischief, dispatched back part of the army under the command of Jovinus: the siege of Aquileia was formed ; but the legionaries defended it with firmness, invited the rest of the Italian cities to follow their example, and threatened the retreat of Julian if compelled to retire before the superior armies of the east.

The seasonable death of the son of
 Constantine delivered the Roman pro-
 vinces from the calamities of civil war. The ap-
 proach of winter could not detain this monarch at
 Antioch, or restrain his impatient desire of revenge.
 A fever, occasioned by the agitation of his mind
 or the fatigues of journey, obliged the emperor to
 halt at Mopsucrene, a little town twelve miles
 beyond Tarsus, where, after a short illness, Con-
 stantius breathed his last, in the forty-fifth year of
 his age, and the twenty-fourth of his reign. Be-
 fore he expired, he is said, probably from an
 anxious concern for the fate of a young and ten-
 der wife, to have named Julian for his successor ;
 but during his long possession of power, the cha-
 racter of the son of Constantine justifies the remark,
 that he inherited the defects without the abilities
 of his father.

A. D. 361.

Nov. 3.

A weak attempt was made by Eusebius, to prolong the reign of the eunuchs, by the election of another emperor ; but their intrigues were rejected by the army, and two officers of rank were dispatched, to assure Julian that every sword in the empire would be drawn at his command. That prince, impatient to visit his new capital, and the place of his birth, advanced from Naissus through the mountains of Hæmus ; when he reached Hera-clea, all Constantinople poured forth to meet and
A. D. 361. behold a hero, whose unexperienced
Dec. 11. youth had vanquished the barbarians of Germany, and had traversed in a successful career the whole continent of Europe, from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the Bosphorus.

But the valour and conduct of Julian were less applauded than his humanity, when his subjects beheld him in a mourning habit accompany the funeral of the late emperor ; he lamented with tears the loss of his imperial kinsman, while he forgot the injuries, and remembered only the obligations which he had received from the son of Constantine. The legions at Aquileia were no sooner assured of the death of Constantius, than they opened their gates, and by sacrificing their leaders, obtained an easy pardon from Julian, who, in the thirty-second year of his age, acquired the undisturbed possession of the Roman world.

The

The hours of Julian, after he ascended the throne, were employed in the diligent discharge of the duties of his exalted station; his temperance and chastity never suffered his body or mind to be relaxed by sensual indulgences. A hasty dinner succeeded a morning spent in public business, and while his ministers retired to repose, the prince pursued, in his library, his indefatigable studies. The supper of the emperor was still less substantial than his dinner; after a short interval of rest, he was awakened by the entrance of fresh secretaries, who had slept the preceding day; and disdainng the amusements of the Circus, the philosophic Julian seemed to consider every moment lost, that was not devoted to the advantage of the public, or the improvement of his own mind.

One of the first and most necessary acts of the government of Julian, was the reformation of the imperial court. The domestic croud of the palace exceeded the expence of the legions; but in the extirpation of this evil, the emperor proceeded with hasty and inconsiderate severity. Without any just, or at least benevolent exceptions for the age, the services, or the poverty of the faithful domestics of the imperial family, by a single edict Julian reduced to an immense desert the palace of Constantinople, and dismissed with ignominy the whole train of slaves and dependents.

After

After correcting the abuses, the attention of the monarch was next diverted to punishing the crimes, of his predecessor's reign. A court of enquiry was instituted, consisting of six judges of the highest rank in the state and army. The office of president was exercised by Sallust, the præfect of the east, to whom hereafter will be added the surname of second, to distinguish him from Sallust the præfect of Gaul. The ferocious zeal of this tribunal sometimes included the innocent in the sentence of the guilty; but the condemnation of Eusebius, who had long abused the favour of Constantius, and now expiated by an ignominious death the cruelty of his servile reign, was universally regarded as an act of justice.

The army of spies and informers, enlisted by Constantius, was disbanded by Julian; the philosopher could pardon the expressions of wayward discontent, and the hero despised the wild projects of rash ambition. A citizen of Ancyra had procured himself a purple garment; the report was carried to Julian, who, after enquiring into the character of his rival, dispatched the informer with a pair of purple slippers to complete the imperial habit of his indiscreet subject. Ten of the body guards of the emperor had conspired his death; a moment of intoxication revealed their treasonable intentions, and Julian was contented
with

with condemning to exile two of the principal offenders. In the execution of the son of Marcellus, who faintly aspired to empire, Julian seems to have forgotten his accustomed clemency; something may be ascribed to personal resentment: the father, when general of the cavalry, had deserted in the Gallic war the standard of Julian and the republic; but the distress of Marcellus on the loss of his son, reconciled the generous temper of the emperor, and by subsequent acts of liberality he endeavoured to heal the wound he had inflicted.

A love of freedom and an attention to the forms of the republic are to be discerned throughout the reign of Julian; he absolutely refused the title of Dominus, or Lord, and assiduously cherished the office or rather the name of consul: he condemned himself to pay a fine of ten pounds for trespassing on the jurisdiction of another magistrate, in performing the manumission of a slave in the presence of the consul; and on this occasion declared to the world, that he was subject, like the rest of his fellow-citizens, to the laws of the republic.

The assemblies of the senate displayed the abilities of Julian as an orator, and his maxims as a republican: In these assemblies he frequently delivered himself in the various strains of praise, of censure, or exhortation; nor was he less attentive

to

to the distribution of justice. Though he might have trusted to the integrity of his Prætorian præfects, he often seated himself by their side, and by his penetration defeated the chicanery of the advocate, who endeavoured to disguise the truth or pervert the laws. These various functions could only be discharged by the man who united in himself, courage, wisdom, and application: but the personal merit of Julian would have raised him from any station; and though he possessed not equally the consummate prudence of Augustus, the magnanimity of Trajan, or the philosophical virtues of Marcus Antoninus, yet he sustained adversity with firmness, prosperity with moderation; and endeavoured throughout his reign, when his virtues were not clouded by enthusiasm, to relieve the distress and secure the happiness of his people.

The apostacy of Julian has obscured the lustre of his character; a devout and sincere attachment to the gods of Athens and Rome, constituted the ruling passion of this extraordinary man: The influence of religious prejudice was permitted to corrupt the powers of an enlightened understanding, and to produce a pernicious effect on the government of the empire.

The cause of this strange and fatal apostacy may be derived from the independent spirit of Julian,

lian, which refused to yield to the passive and unresisting obedience required, in the name of religion, by the ministers of the church : the scandals of the Arian controversy, the contests of the eastern bishops, and the frequent alterations of their creeds, soon changed his doubts into invincible aversion. The elevation of his brother Gallus enlarged him from confinement, and allowed him to breathe the air of freedom, of literature, and of paganism. *Ædesius*, who had fixed his school at Pergamus, first instilled into the mind of Julian, the doctrines of Plato ; these were afterwards confirmed by the more skilful *Maximus*, who, at Ephesus, secretly initiated his pupil, then in the twentieth year of his age. His residence at Athens completed this unnatural alliance of superstition and philosophy.

But the important secret of the apostacy of Julian was cautiously circulated among the adherents of the ancient worship, and the young prince consulted his safety by carefully concealing his religion. This dissimulation lasted above ten years, from his secret initiation at Ephesus, to the beginning of the civil war ; and his aversion to christianity was encreased, by being compelled to join in public worship with a sect he despised and abhorred. But still it remained for Julian, as a philosopher, to justify his relinquishing a faith, which he had

so long, at least externally, professed. Amidst his preparations for the Persian war, he composed that work which contained the substance of the arguments he had so long revolved in his mind. The faithful were alarmed, and the pagans derived from the performance of the imperial proselyte, a new supply of fallacious objections.

The christians had more to fear from the power, than the arguments of Julian ; but the prudent humanity of that prince extended to all the inhabitants of the Roman world a free toleration. The bishops and clergy, who had been banished by the Arian monarch, were recalled from exile, while the followers of Polytheism were delivered from the vexations they had sustained in the reign of Constantine. The emperor himself assumed, according to the custom of his predecessors, the character of supreme pontiff, and executed the duties of the sacred office with pious diligence. A considerable part of the revenue was consumed in procuring statues for the altars of the gods, and large sums were set aside to repair and decorate the ancient temples which had suffered from time, or been injured by christian zeal.

Though Julian over-looked the merit of christian constancy, he nobly rewarded those Gentiles who had preferred their gods to the favour of the former emperors ; nor was he indifferent to the claims

claims of the christians, who prudently embraced the religion of their present sovereign; the treasures of the Roman empire seconded his arguments, and a seasonable conversion conferred success on a candidate, or expiated the guilt of a criminal. The natural temper of the soldiers made his conquests over their religious tenets easy; and the weight of an army in an absolute government, rendered the pious seduction important. The legions of Gaul devolved themselves to the faith, as well as the fortunes of their victorious leader; and, even before the death of Constantius, he had the satisfaction of announcing to his friends, that they assisted with fervent devotion, and voracious appetite, at the sacrifices which were repeatedly offered in his camp, of whole hecatombs of fat oxen.

The restoration of the ancient temple of Jerusalem attracted the ambitious mind of the emperor. The success of the undertaking would have been a specious argument against the faith of prophecy, and the truth of Revelation; Alypius, who had long been honoured with the name of friend by Julian, and whose abilities had been displayed in the administration of Britain, received a commission to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, and restore its pristine beauty. In this arduous task, the governor of Palestine was ordered to concur and diligently afford his strenuous support.

The

The Jews, in hopes at last of obtaining the completion of their wishes, flocked together from every part of the empire, and contributed their fortunes and labours to accelerate the desired event ; but the power of a great monarch, and the enthusiasm of a whole people were exerted in vain. Contemporary writers have recorded the præter-natural obstacles which interrupted the progress of the work ; and Ammianus Marcellinus asserts, “ That horrible balls of fire, breaking out from the foundations with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place, from time to time, inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen ; and the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, the undertaking was relinquished.” It remains however to observe, the restoration of the temple of Jerusalem was attempted within the last six months of the life of Julian, and while that prince was absent, engaged in the Persian war.

Though the emperor maintained the freedom of religious worship, yet he constantly distinguished the pagans by his favour and friendship, and considered the christians as only entitled to his justice. His policy was exerted to deprive them of temporal honours and advantages ; he prohibited them, from teaching in schools, the arts of grammar

mar and rhetoric; he removed the greatest part of the christian officers from their employments in the state and army; he condemned them to restore the pagan temples, which they had destroyed in the preceding reign; and encouraged the populace to insult those whom he apparently affected to protect.

In a tumult at Alexandria, the Arian primate of that city had been massacred: The lenity of Julian could easily pardon the murder of a christian bishop; but he regarded not with the same complacency the return of Athanasius; who, on the destruction of his unworthy competitor, had again seated himself on a throne, from which he had been so often expelled. The emperor denied that the Galilæans, though recalled by his edict from exile, were restored by that indulgence to their respective churches; and he expressed his astonishment, that a criminal so frequently condemned by his predecessors, should dare to usurp the archiepiscopal throne, without awaiting the determination of his sovereign. Athanasius was once more banished from the city; and the inflexible persecution which Julian adopted, betrays his opinion of the abilities and courage of the primate; who, perhaps, only avoided death by prudently retiring to the monasteries of the desert.

Although the persecution of Athanasius reflects disgrace on the philosophical character of Julian,

yet it must be acknowledged, the zeal and imprudence of the christians too often provoked the just indignation of the emperor ; they rejected the resignation of the primitive disciples, insinuated the possibility of resistance, and not unfrequently overturned the altars of the deities he adored, in the very presence of the sovereign. Had the emperor returned victorious from the Persian war, it is probable he would not long have adhered to the moderate system he had hitherto affected ; the honour of his gods might have prevailed over his prudence : but the church was too firmly established by Constantine, to be subverted by Julian, without involving the empire in all the calamities of a civil war.

CHAPTER XVI.

EXPEDITION OF JULIAN AGAINST THE PERSIANS—
RETREAT AND DEATH OF JULIAN — ELECTION
OF JOVIAN—HE SAVES THE ROMAN ARMY
BY A DISGRACEFUL TREATY.

IN an elegant fable which Julian composed under the name of The Cæsars, the former emperors are introduced with Alexander the Great, contending before the gods for a celestial crown, the reward of superior merit. The prize is assigned to the mild virtues of Marcus Antoninus: but though Julian in his writings might commend the philosophical character of Marcus, in his actions he was ambitious to emulate the martial glory of the son of Philip. Possessed of the full powers of mind and body, he was desirous to signalize his reign by some splendid military achievements. By the nations of the west he was already feared and respected; the additional fortifications he had

constructed, and the terror of his name, sufficiently secured the Thracian and Illyrian frontiers. The ambassadors of the east, from the continent of India and the isle of Ceylon, had congratulated his accession to the throne. The successor of Cyrus and Artaxerxes was a rival worthy his arms; and he determined to chastise the haughty Persian, who had so long braved the power and majesty of Rome.

When Sapor was informed that the sceptre of Rome was wielded by a young and victorious monarch, he condescended to make overtures of peace. With a smile of contempt, the emperor returned for answer, That it was needless to treat by ambassadors, as he himself had determined speedily to visit the court of Persia. Ardent in all his undertakings, Julian urged with diligence the military preparations. A considerable army was formed, the generals appointed; and marching from Constantinople through Asia

A. D. 362.

Minor, the emperor arrived at Antioch eight months after the death of his predecessor. The necessity of regulating the state of the empire, restoring the worship of the gods, recruiting the strength of the Gallic, and confirming the discipline of the eastern, legions, controlled the impatience of the prince to march into the heart of Persia; he was persuaded to fix his residence at
Antioch,

Antioch, a city whose effeminate amusements and licentious manners soon disgusted the hero and the philosopher.

If the luxurious enjoyments of the citizens of Antioch displeased the rigid stoic, these delicate natives of the east were not disposed to contemplate with respect the rustic appearance, coarse habit, and frugal fare of the Roman emperor. The games of the theatre and circus, which he despised, formed the glory and happiness of Antioch; and the majority of the people, who, though they neglected the moral precepts, were attached to the speculative doctrines of christianity, regarded with aversion and horror, the person, pursuits, and principles of the apostate. Even the Arians and Athanasians seemed for a moment to renounce their characteristic opposition, and to be actuated with the same pious hatred against their common adversary.

The inclemency of the season had affected the harvests of Syria, and a scarcity of corn increased the public discontent. When the citizens complained of the high price of fish and poultry, the emperor declared, that a frugal city ought to be satisfied with a regular supply of wine, oil, and bread: but he confessed it was the duty of the sovereign to provide for the subsistence of his subjects. With this view, he published an inconsti-

ent edict, commanding corn to be sold at the same price as in years of plenty; and that his example might strengthen the laws, from Hierapolis, Chalcis, and Egypt, he brought into the market twenty-two thousand measures. This wheat was immediately purchased by the rich merchants: the public distress continued; but Julian, satisfied with his own policy, treated the complaints of the people as a vain and ungrateful murmur. The remonstrance of the municipal senate served only further to exasperate him; he was convinced the senators, who possessed lands, or were concerned in trade, had contributed by artful monopolies to increase the calamities of the country; and the disrespectful boldness of their language was attended by the commitment of the whole body to prison. Before evening the humanity of the emperor prevailed over his resentment; the guards were removed, and they were permitted to retire to their respective houses. The offence was forgiven, but the citizens of Antioch never forgot the punishment.

The wit and levity of the Syrian Greeks embraced the opportunity of the licentious days of the Saturnalia to avenge their grievances. The streets resounded with songs, which ridiculed the laws, the religion, the conduct, and even the *beard* of the emperor. These compositions were introduced by the connivance of the magistrates, and accompanied by

by the applause of the multitude. We cannot but admire the inoffensive retaliation of Julian. He might have abandoned Antioch to the lust, rapacity, and cruelty of the Gallic legions; he might, with more propriety, have deprived the capital of the east of its privileges and honours. He had been insulted by satires and libels; in his turn he composed, under the title of *The Enemy of the Beard*, an ironical confession of his own faults, and a severe invective against the effeminate manners of Antioch. This singular performance remains a monument of the wit, resentment, humanity, and indiscretion of Julian; who afterwards, renouncing Antioch, declared his resolution to pass the ensuing winter at Tarsus in Cilicia.

Yet Antioch could boast of one citizen, whose virtues and abilities commanded the esteem of the emperor. The sophist Libanius was early distinguished by his superiority in the arts of rhetoric and declamation. The præceptors of Julian had extorted a rash assurance, which served to inflame his curiosity, that he would never attend the lectures of their adversary: he secretly procured the writings, imitated the style, and when he ascended the throne, declared his intention of rewarding the Syrian sophist. Libanius, instead of joining the croud, calmly expected the arrival of

Julian at Antioch, and disclaiming the favours of the prince, maintained the character of an independent philosopher. Julian, who disdained the panegyrics of a venal court, was flattered by the praise, and listened to the admonitions of the sophist of Antioch, who refused his favours, loved his person, and protected his memory.

A. D. 363. In the beginning of the spring the
March 5. emperor took the field, and directed his march towards the confines of Persia. The senate of Aleppo, whom he had the mortification to find almost entirely christians, received with cold respect the disciple of Paganism : at Batnæ, a small town about twenty miles from Hierapolis, the rites of sacrifice were decently prepared ; but the tumultuous applause of the inhabitants too plainly discovered their conduct proceeded from deference to the sovereign, rather than devotion to the gods.

From Hierapolis, situated almost on the banks of the Euphrates, and the general rendezvous for the Roman troops, the impatient emperor advanced in fourscore miles to Carrhæ, an ancient city of Mesopotamia. The halt of a few days was employed in devout offerings in the temple of the Moon, and immense preparations for the Persian war. Carrhæ is the point of separation of two great roads ; and Julian could no longer
conceal,

conceal, whether it was his design to invade the dominions of Sapor on the side of the Tigris, or the Euphrates.

An army of thirty thousand men was detached under the command of Procopius and Sebastian; these were to direct their march to Nisibis, secure the frontier, and then pass the Tigris. After ravaging the districts of Media and Adiabene, Julian imagined that they might arrive under the walls of Ctesiphon about the same time that he himself, advancing along the banks of the Euphrates, should besiege the Persian capital. The success of this plan depended on the powerful assistance of the king of Armenia; but the feeble Tiranus, who then filled the Armenian throne, was averse to any enterprise of danger and glory. He disguised his timidity by the language of religion and gratitude; he expressed his attachment to the memory of Constantius, and maintained a cold reserve towards his former competitor; he reigned over a nation of christians, and was restrained by conscience from contributing to victories, which might prove fatal to the church. The epistle of Julian, who treated the king of Armenia as his slave, served further to alienate the mind of Tiranus, who, conscious of his royal descent from the Arfacides, received with secret indignation the imperial mandate,

The

The Roman legions, which, to divert the attention of Sapor, had pointed towards Nisibis and the Tigris, suddenly wheeled to the left, traversed the plain of Carrhæ, arrived the third day on the banks of the Euphrates, and pursuing the winding course of that river, after marching ninety miles, discovered Circesium, the extreme limit of the Roman dominions. The army of Julian was the most numerous that any of the Cæsars had ever led against Persia; it consisted of sixty-five thousand well-disciplined soldiers, a formidable body of Scythian auxiliaries, and several tribes of Saracens, or Arabs. A fleet of eleven hundred ships navigating the Euphrates, attended the motions and supplied the wants of the army: A large magazine of biscuit and vinegar was provided for the use of the soldiers; but the indulgence of wine was strictly prohibited. On the Romans passing over the river Chaboras, which separates the two mighty empires, Julian, adopting the manner of the ancients, animated the legions in an eloquent oration: This was succeeded by a donative of one hundred and thirty pieces of silver to every soldier; and the bridge of the Chaboras was instantly cut away, to convince the troops their safety was to depend on the success of their arms. But to repel any attacks from the hostile Arabs, Julian, by a detach-

A. D. 363.

April 7th.

a detachment of four thousand men, augmented to ten thousand the garrison of the fortress of Circesium.

On the Romans entering the country of the enemy, the order of march was disposed into three columns. The strength of the infantry, in the centre, was commanded by their master-general Victor; Nevitta, on the right, led a column of legions along the banks of the Euphrates, and almost in sight of the fleet: on the left, the army was protected by the cavalry, under the orders of Arinthæus and Hormisdas. The latter, a Persian prince of the race of the Sassanides, had escaped from prison to the court of Constantine; and having raised himself, though a christian, by his valour and fidelity to the first honours of the Roman service, convinced his country how dangerous the resentment of an injured subject might prove. A flying detachment, under the directions of Lucilianus observed the signals, and conveyed the intelligence, of hostile approach. Dagalaiphus and Secundinus conducted the rear guard. The baggage was disposed in the intervals of the columns, and the line of march extended almost ten miles. The ordinary post of Julian was at the head of the centre column; but escorted by a small body of cavalry, he rapidly moved to whatever part his presence could animate or protect.

The

The warlike inhabitants of Anatho, a city of two long streets, which inclose a small island in the midst, and two spots on either side, of the Euphrates, were diverted from their intentions of opposing the emperor by the exhortations of Hormisdas, and the terror of the approaching fleet. But the impregnable fortress of Thilutha was passed with the vain insult from the invader, that when he had subdued the interior provinces of Persia, Thilutha would no longer refuse to grace the triumph of the conqueror. The inhabitants of the open towns, unable to resist, fled with precipitation. During the march, the Surenas, or Persian general, incessantly hovered round the army, and the valiant Hormisdas, with some difficulty, escaped from the enemy; but the country became every instant less favourable to cavalry, and the Romans in fifteen days reached Macepraeta, about three hundred miles from the fortress of Circesium,

Assyria, which stretched beyond the Tigris as far as the mountains of Media, and extended about four hundred miles from the ancient wall of Macepraeta to the territory of Basra, was devoted by Julian to the calamities of war. The Assyrians, by destroying the dams of their rivers, had rendered the roads almost impassable; but the perseverance of the legionaries overcame every difficulty;

difficulty: the example of Julian animated his soldiers to endure toil as well as danger; the damage was repaired, and the waters restored to their former channel.

Two cities of Assyria had the presumption to resist the Roman arms. Perisabor, about fifty miles from Ctesiphon, rejected the advice of Hormisdas with contempt; in two days the town was destroyed, and the citadel surrendered: the feeble remnant of a flourishing people was permitted to retire, the magazines of arms and furniture were distributed among the troops, and the useless stores were consumed by fire, or thrown into the Euphrates.

The fortress of Maogamalcha threatened a more formidable resistance, and seemed to have been constructed as the safeguard of the capital of Persia, from which it was only eleven miles distant. A mine was carried on under the foundations of the walls; and while the garrison, from their ramparts, assured Julian he might ascend to the stately mansion of Ormusd before he could take Maogamalcha, the city was already taken. The troops who defended it were distracted with various feigned attacks; and a select detachment issuing from the mine, ascended into a deserted tower: the astonished garrison abandoned the walls, the gates were opened, and the revenge of the
soldier

foldier was fatiated by an undistinguishing massacre. The fortifications were razed to the ground, and not a vestige was left that the city of Maogamalcha ever existed.

The virtues of Julian were conspicuously displayed during the whole of the expedition. The qualities of temperance and sobriety were become habitual to him; he assumed a stern dominion over his appetites, and preserved his chastity pure and inviolate: nor was he betrayed by curiosity even into a visit to his female captures, whose exquisite beauty would have been, without reluctance, submitted to his embrace. In every danger he was foremost, in every labour most assiduous: through the flat and flooded country he marched on foot at the head of his legions; and the imperial purple was frequently wet and dirty as the coarse garment of the meanest soldier. When he stood near the city of Perisabor he was almost overwhelmed by a sudden shower of darts and stones; and as he examined the fortifications of Maogamalcha, two Persians rushed upon him with drawn sabres; he sustained their strokes on a shield, and with his sword laid one dead at his feet. His own example enabled him to restore among the troops the severity of ancient discipline. Three squadrons, who in a skirmish with the Surenas had misbehaved and lost their standards, were

were punished with ignominy or death ; but his firmness was more severely exercised by the avarice of his army, who complained the donative of one hundred pieces of silver on the taking of Maogamalcha was inadequate to their services.

“ Riches,” exclaimed the indignant emperor, “ are the object of your desires ; those riches are “ in the hands of the Persians, and the spoils of “ this fruitful country are proposed as the prize “ of your valour and discipline. Believe me, the “ Roman republic, which formerly possessed such “ immense treasures, is reduced to want and “ wretchedness, since our princes have been persuaded to purchase with gold the tranquillity of “ the barbarians. But, continued Julian, if you “ will rashly persist, if you are determined to renew the shameful and mischievous examples of “ old seditions, proceed—As it becomes an emperor who has filled the first rank among men, “ I am prepared to die, standing ; and to despise a “ precarious life, which, every hour, may depend “ on an accidental fever.” His manly resolution commanded the instant obedience of the soldiers, and their courage was kindled by his asseverations. “ So may I reduce the Persians under the yoke : “ Thus may I restore the strength and splendour “ of the republic.” A desire of fame was the ruling passion of Julian ; but it was not till he had buried

buried Maogamalcha in ruins, that he said, "We
" have now furnished some materials for the so-
" phist of Antioch."

The obstacles which presented themselves in forming the siege of Ctesiphon were numerous and formidable. The forts which surrounded that city, and might have embarrassed the motions of the Romans, were stormed by the valour of the legionaries. A canal dug by Trajan, but long choaked and almost obliterated, was restored by Julian; and the fleet, avoiding the barriers with which the Persians had obstructed the passage of the river, sailed in triumph through the copious channel, and entered the Tigris.

To transport the Roman army over this river was an enterprise of less toil, but of more danger; the stream was broad and rapid, and the entrenchments on the opposite bank lined with a numerous army. The expedient by which he hoped to surmount this difficulty, Julian concealed to the last moment, even from his own generals. Under pretence of examining the stores fourscore barks were unladen: a select detachment was ordered to stand to their arms on the first signal; and after consuming the day in the celebration of military games, the emperor at supper informed his officers, that he had fixed that night for the passage of the Tigris; their remon-
strances

stances were ineffectual. The first vessels were fired by the enemy in attempting to land; and Julian, who, when he beheld the flame on the opposite side, understood the danger, converted it into a pre-sage of victory. "Our fellow-soldiers," he eagerly exclaimed, "are already masters of the bank; see! they make the appointed signal; let us hasten to emulate and assist their courage." The united weight of the fleet broke the violence of the current; they reached the opposite shore with sufficient speed to rescue their companions; they climbed the steep bank amidst a shower of darts and stones, and stood victorious on the rampart. The troops, by the skill and experience of Julian, were soon formed into an order of battle; an obstinate engagement was maintained for twelve hours, the gradual retreat of the Persians was changed into a disorderly flight, of which the shameful example was given by the Surenas himself. The Romans in this action acknowledged only the loss of seventy-five men, and affirmed the barbarians had left on the field of battle six thousand of their bravest soldiers.

But the prosperity of Julian, which hitherto had flowed in an uninterrupted tide, began now to ebb; while he ravaged the adjacent country of Ctesiphon, he vainly expected the junction of Procopius and Sebastian, whose march he hoped

would have been executed with the same success and diligence as his own: these expectations were disappointed by the dissensions of the two generals, and by the treachery of the Armenian king, who withdrew his troops from the camp of the Romans.

When Julian was compelled to abandon all hopes of this reinforcement, he determined, after consulting his generals, to relinquish the siege of Ctesiphon; yet he rejected with disdain the offers of a negotiation of peace. Sapor, accustomed to the irresolution of Constantius, was surprised at the firmness and diligence of his successor: his own forces from the distant provinces could be but slowly assembled; and, before he could lead an army into the field, he beheld the devastation of Assyria; his pride was humbled, a minister of rank and consequence was dispatched, under pretence of private business, to Hormisdas, to request an introduction to the emperor. Julian was inflexible; but he desired Hormisdas to dismiss the minister privately, lest the hope of an honourable peace might cool the ardour of the troops.

From the walls of Ctesiphon the emperor marched to seek the army of the Persian monarch, and, no longer confining himself to the banks of the Tigris or Euphrates, determined to advance into the inland provinces: in this resolution he

was

was confirmed by a Persian nobleman, who, to serve his country, assumed the appearance of a fugitive. In vain did the experienced Hormisdas urge his suspicions; the credulous Julian, by the advice of the traitor, issued an hasty order to destroy the whole of his navy; and after reserving a supply of provisions for twenty days, eleven hundred vessels with their stores were committed to the flames. The murmurs of the soldiers, on this occasion, seem to impeach the judgment of the general; but let us recollect that a similar conduct in Agathocles and Cortez was crowned with success, and has been attended by applause.

The destruction of his magazines compelled Julian to seek subsistence in the fertile region between the river Tigris and the mountains of Media. But on the approach of the Roman army, the inhabitants deserted the open villages; the cattle was driven away, the corn and grass were consumed with fire, and the emperor was soon reduced to the scanty stock he had preserved from the destruction of his stores: before this was entirely expended he might hope to reach by hasty marches the wealthy and defenceless cities of Ec-batana, or Susa; but the ignorance or treachery of the guides, deprived him of this resource, and the Romans wandered several days to the eastward of Bagdad. The Persian, whose counsels had

proved so fatal, escaped from the camp, and his followers were compelled by tortures to reveal the secret of his perfidy. The vain dreams of conquest vanished from the anxious mind of Julian, and he embraced the resolution of endeavouring to save the army by a rapid movement towards Corduene, a fertile province, which acknowledged the dominion of Rome; the signal of retreat was given seventy days after he passed the Chaboras with sanguine expectations of subverting the Persian monarchy.

While the Romans advanced into the country they had been incessantly harrassed by bodies of cavalry, who, however, maintained a cautious distance; but the moment the legions began to retire toward the Tigris, they were alarmed by the appearance of more formidable detachments, and soon found themselves surrounded by an army of Persians commanded by Meranes, an officer of ability and experience, accompanied by two sons of the great king. In repeated charges the Persians were constantly repulsed, and the action of Maronga was attended by a considerable slaughter of the barbarians, though achieved by almost an equal loss on the side of the victorious legions. But the invincible enemies of the Romans were famine and the climate; the former was vainly attempted to be relieved by Julian, who distributed

tributed the provisions of the imperial household, and contented himself with the fare of the common foldiers. The sultry heat of an Assyrian summer oppressed the hardy veterans, accustomed to the cold regions of Gaul and Germany, the most gloomy apprehensions were entertained, that before they could reach the frontiers of the empire, the Romans must perish by disease, by famine, or the sword.

The restless mind of Julian, in his broken slumbers, was agitated by foreboding visions. A fiery meteor, which shot athwart the sky and vanished from his sight, convinced him he had seen the menacing countenance of the god of war. The Tuscan Haruspices warned him to abstain from action; but superstition gave way to reason, and the emperor pursued his march through a mountainous country, the hills of which had been secretly occupied by the Persians. An alarm that his rear was suddenly attacked brought back the attentive monarch. Without his cuirass, and defended only by a shield he had snatched from a soldier, he hastened with a sufficient detachment to repel the enemy. A similar danger recalled him to the front; and in the same instant the centre claimed his presence and assistance. The barbarians fled; and Julian, eager in the pursuit, was exposed to a cloud of missile weapons. A javelin,

after raising the skin of his arm, transpierced the ribs, and fixed in an interior part of the liver; he fell senseless from his horse, and by his guards was conveyed out of the tumult of the battle into an adjacent tent. The report of the event inspired the Romans with invincible valour and the thirst of revenge; the conflict was maintained till night: on the left wing the Romans sustained some loss; but the fortune of the day was adverse to the barbarians; Meranes and Nohordates, their two generals, were slain; they abandoned the field; and had Julian survived, the advantage might have been improved into a decisive victory.

Julian, on his first recovery from the fainting fit, called for his horse and arms; the painful effort
 A. D. 363. exhausted his strength, and the sur-
 June 26. geons discovered the symptoms of approaching death. He employed the awful moments that remained as became a hero and a sage. After reflecting with pleasure on the innocence of his private life, and declaring, he had preserved the supreme authority pure and immaculate, submitting his actions to the laws of prudence, of justice, and of moderation, he continues, " I now offer my tribute of gratitude to
 " the eternal Being, who has not suffered me to
 " perish by the cruelty of a tyrant, by the secret
 " dagger of conspiracy, or by the slow tortures
 " of

“ of lingering disease. He has given me in the
“ midst of an honourable career, a splendid and
“ glorious departure from this world ; and I hold
“ it equally absurd, equally base, to solicit or to
“ decline the stroke of fate.—Thus much I have
“ attempted to say ; but my strength fails me,
“ and I feel the approach of death.—I shall cau-
“ tiously refrain from any word that may tend to
“ influence your suffrages in the election of an
“ emperor : my choice might be imprudent ;
“ and if it should not be ratified by the consent of
“ the army, it might be fatal to the person whom
“ I should recommend. I shall only, as a good
“ citizen, express my hopes, that the Romans
“ may be blessed with the government of a virtu-
“ ous sovereign.” After this he entered into an
argument with the philosophers Priscus and Maxi-
mus, on the nature of the soul. His wound, from
the exertion, began to bleed afresh ; he called for
a draught of cold water, and this extraordinary
man expired about midnight, in the thirty-second
year of his age, and after a reign of one year and
eight months from the death of Constantius.

The death of Julian, in whom the race of Con-
stantius Chlorus was extinct, left the empire
without a master, and without an heir. The situ-
ation of a famished army, encompassed by a host
of barbarians, shortened the moments of grief and

deliberation; the body of the deceased prince was decently embalmed, and the various officers of the army were summoned to assist in a military senate. The merit of Sallust united their suffrages; but the venerable præfect, alledging his infirmities, declined the offer with firmness. While they debated, a few voices saluted Jovian, then
A.D. 363. no more than first of the domestics,
June 27. with the names of emperor and Augustus: the acclamation was repeated by the guards; and the new prince, astonished at his fortune, was invested with the imperial ornaments, and received the oath of fidelity from the generals. The strongest recommendation of Jovian was the merit of his father Varronian, who enjoyed in retirement the fruit of his services; yet the son had supported with credit the character of a christian and a soldier, and his cheerful temper and familiar wit had recommended him to his fellow-soldiers.

The first order of the new emperor was to prosecute the intended march: but the death of Julian, revealed by a deserter, revived the confidence of Sapor; he continued the pursuit, and by his incessant attacks threw the rear guard into disorder, and the battle was only restored by the persevering valour of the Romans. On the fourth day from the death of Julian, the army encamped near
the

the city Dura. The Tigris was still on their left; but though five hundred Gauls, with skill and vigour, stemmed the rapid stream and surprised a post of the enemy, the rest of the army, after ineffectual efforts, were compelled to relinquish their attempt to pass the river. Their distress was hourly augmented, and the bands of the barbarians increased, while the provisions and hopes of the legions diminished.

In this forlornless situation the sound of peace revived the fainting spirits of the Romans, but the terms on which it was concluded have stained for ever the reputation of Jovian. A safe retreat was purchased by the cession of the five provinces acquired by the arms of Galerius, the important city of Nisibis, Singara, and the castle of the Moors, one of the strongest fortresses in Mesopotamia: The Romans also agreed to abandon for ever the king and kingdom of Armenia. In consequence of these concessions, a truce for thirty years was stipulated between the hostile nations, and Jovian was permitted to explore the most convenient place for the passage of the Tigris. As soon as the troops reached the western bank of that river, their dread of the barbarians was no more; yet in a laborious march through the plains of Mesopotamia they endured the last extremities of hunger and thirst. A small supply of provisions from
Sebastian

Sebastian and Procopius announced the fidelity of those generals, and the remains of the Roman army at length pitched their tents under the walls of Nisibis.

The ignominious terms of peace were soon revealed, and diffused throughout the empire: the minds of the people were filled with astonishment and grief; the citizens of Nisibis, in particular, conjured the emperor not to abandon them to a barbarian exasperated by the firmness with which they had formerly repelled his attacks. Their intreaties were ineffectual; and as Jovian supposed their discontent might induce them to submit to the Persian government, he commanded them, under pain of death, to leave the city within three days. They were assigned an asylum in Amida, and, with this reinforcement, that city soon became the capital of Mesopotamia. The castle of the Moors and Singara were also evacuated, and the five provinces beyond the Tigris restored to the Persian dominion.

After performing these engagements, Jovian proceeded with his court to Antioch, and left to Procopius, the kinsman of Julian, the honour of conducting the funeral of that prince. The corpse of the deceased emperor was transported from Nisibis to Tarsus, where his remains were interred, and his stately tomb was erected on the banks of the river Cydnus,

CHAPTER XVII.

DEATH OF JOVIAN—ELECTION OF VALENTINIAN, WHO ASSOCIATES HIS BROTHER VALENS, AND MAKES THE FINAL DIVISION OF THE EASTERN AND WESTERN EMPIRES—REVOLT OF PROCOPIUS—DEATH OF VALENTINIAN—HIS TWO SONS GRATIAN AND VALENTINIAN II. SUCCEED TO THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

THE faith of Jovian was announced to his people by his displaying, in his march from Nisibis to Antioch, the banner of the cross at the head of his legions. The edicts of Julian were abolished, and the ecclesiastical immunities restored and enlarged. The attachment of the emperor to the Nicene creed was declared, by the reverence he expressed for the virtues of the great Athanasius. The veteran of the faith once more seated himself on the archiepiscopal throne, and assured Jovian that his devotion would be rewarded by a long and successful reign; and the policy

policy of the monarch, to secure the completion of these assurances, granted to his subjects universal toleration.

But the predictions of the primate of Alexandria were soon confuted by the premature death of Jovian, who, impatient to possess the palace of Constantinople, had advanced as far as Ancyra the capital of Galatia; where he himself assumed, and bestowed on his infant son, the ensigns of the consulship. At Dadaftana, a town between Ancyra and Nice, the emperor, after indulging in an intemperate supper, retired to rest; and the next morning was found dead in his bed. Various

A. D. 364. causes were assigned for his sudden
Feb. 17. death; the quantity of wine, the qua-

lity of the mushrooms he had swallowed the preceding evening, and the vapour of charcoal which might suffocate him in his sleep, have all been insisted on; but the neglect of a regular enquiry seems alone to have countenanced the suspicion of poison: his body was sent to Constantinople; and his infant son survived sixteen years afterwards, but had then been deprived of one eye by the jealousy of the government.

The Roman world, after the death of Jovian, remained ten days without a master. The vacant throne was once more offered to, and rejected by, Sallust; and when the virtues of the father were
alleged

alledged in favour of the son, the venerable præfect declared, the advanced age of the one, and the unexperienced youth of the other, rendered them equally unfit to govern. After several candidates had been proposed and rejected, the suffrages of the assembly were united by the merit of Valentinian, the son of Count Gratian. The father, from an obscure situation, had risen to the highest commands of Africa and Britain; the son had on every occasion displayed an undaunted spirit and vigorous mind. His person was tall and majestic, his countenance manly; and though ignorant of the arts of rhetoric, his ready eloquence commanded attention. His habits of temperance and chastity acquired the esteem, and his sense of military discipline enforced the obedience of his fellow-soldiers. He professed the christian faith, and in the forty-third year of his age was called to the government of the Roman world.

Valentinian was invested with the purple amidst the acclamations of the troops; but when, from his tribunal, he began to address the armed multitude, he was interrupted by their clamours, that he should instantly name a colleague. His intrepid calmness obtained silence; after declaring since they had raised him from the station of private life, it was *his* duty to consult the interest of the empire, and that the choice

A. D. 364.

Feb. 26.

choice of an associate required deliberation ; he added, " That deliberation shall be *my* care ; let "*your* conduct be dutiful and consistent ; retire to "*your* quarters ; refresh your minds and bodies ; " and expect the accustomed donative on the accession of an emperor." The astonished troops confessed the voice of their master, and Valentinian was conducted in solemn pomp to the palace of Nice. Though the emperor rejected the importunities of the soldiers, he consulted the assembly of the chiefs ; " Most excellent prince," said Dagalaiphus, " if you consider only your family, you have a brother ; if you love the republic, look round for the most deserving of the Romans." The emperor remained silent, but on his arrival at Constantinople bestowed the title of Augustus on his brother Valens.

The most amiable quality of Valens was his sincere attachment to his benefactor, whose superior genius and authority he readily acknowledged. Valentinian, in the final division of the empire, assigned to his brother, then in the thirty-sixth year of his age, the præfecture of the east, with the capital of Constantinople ; to himself he reserved the præfectures of Illyricum, Italy, and Gaul, and fixed his residence at Milan.

The

The tranquillity of the east was disturbed by the revolt of Procopius, the kinsman of Julian. A rumour prevailed that Julian had invested Procopius, before the altar of the Moon at Carrhæ, with the imperial purple. His instant submission disarmed the jealousy of Jovian, and he was permitted to retire with his wife and family to his patrimony in Cappadocia. On the accession of Valentinian and Valens, he was arrested in the name of the new sovereigns; but escaping from the vigilance of his guards to the sea coast of the Euxine, he passed over to the country of the Bosphorus. In a moment of despair he quitted his sequestered retreat, and embarked in a merchant vessel for Constantinople. At first he lurked in the villages of Bithynia, but at last confiding to the fidelity of two friends, he obtained intelligence of the state of public affairs. The people were discontented at the imprudent dismissal of the præfect Sallust; the character of Valens was despised, and he himself absent in Syria. Two cohorts of Gauls were persuaded to listen to the proposals of the conspirators. They were drawn up near the baths of Anastasia; and Procopius, clothed in a purple vest, appeared, as if he rose from the dead, in the midst of Constantinople. The soldiers received him with shouts of joy and vows of fidelity; the malecontents flocked to his standard; the magistrates

A. D. 365.
September.

gistrates were seized, the prisons and arsenals broke open; and in a few hours Procopius became master of the imperial city. The Gothic princes contracted alliance with, and the cities of Thrace and the fortresses of the Lower Danube, acknowledged the dominion of, the usurper. His generals subdued the wealthy provinces of Bithynia and Asia; and the renowned legions of the Jovians and Herculians embraced and defended the cause of Procopius. The alliance of Faustina, the widow of the emperor Constantius, added dignity to his claims; the princess Constantia, scarce five years old, was shewn to the army, and the soldiers declared they would shed the last drop of their blood in defence of the royal infant.

Valentinian was involved in the difficulties of a German war, when he was alarmed by the revolt of the east, and the rumour of the death of Valens; but Valens was alive, and at Cæsarea, when he first received intelligence of the rebellion. Despairing of his fortune, he proposed to negotiate with the usurper, and abdicate the purple. From this design he was dissuaded by his ministers. The minds of the people were conciliated by again appointing Sallust præfect; the veteran generals of the empire were persuaded to support by their influence and abilities the brother of Valentinian; and the soldiers of Procopius as readily deserted

serted his standard as they had joined it. In two engagements at Thyatira and Nacolia, the unfortunate kinsman of Julian was betrayed by his troops; and after wandering some time among the woods, he suffered the punishment of unsuccessful rebellion. A. D. 366.
May 28.

The stern temper of Valentinian generally rendered him insensible to the dictates of humanity; he considered clemency as a weakness, and severity as a virtue. The timid mind of Valens was actuated by suspicion and dread; he punished because he feared or distrusted. Rome and Antioch, during the reign of the two brothers, were equally polluted by frequent executions from different motives; but when rage or terror influenced not the conduct of Valentinian and Valens, their laws were just, their government temperate, and their regulations humane. By the former, fourteen skilful physicians were appointed in the fourteen different quarters of Rome, with considerable stipends; and the good sense of an illiterate soldier founded an useful institution for the education of youth, and the support of declining science. But the most honourable circumstance of his character is the impartiality he preserved in an age of religious contention; and his wise and moderate administration contributed to soften the manners and abate the prejudices of religious factions.

The subjects of the emperor of the east had reason to lament the different system adopted by Valens; that prince resigned his conscience to the direction of the Arians, and religiously persecuted the orthodox disciples of the catholic church. The death of Athanasius seated on the archiepiscopal throne of Alexandria the Arian Lucius, who endeavoured to purchase the favour of the reigning party by the sufferings of their christian brethren. The monks of Egypt excited with more justice the imperial indignation; and Valens commanded those subjects whom he conceived to have gratified a lazy disposition under the pretence of religion, to be dragged from their solitude, and to be compelled to discharge the active duties; but it is probable the executions which stained the monasteries, and were directed by Arian priests, exceeded the intentions of the sovereign.

The wealth and avarice of the clergy, which have exercised the judgment of modern legislators, called forth the attention of Valentinian; by several regulations, he endeavoured to prevent the ecclesiastics from abusing the confidence of a timid conscience, or defrauding the expectations of a natural heir. The director was no longer permitted to receive any gift or legacy from his spiritual daughter; but the legislator did not immediately discover, that the industry checked in the pursuit
of

of private emolument would be exerted, under the names of piety and patriotism, in augmenting the wealth, and extending the possessions of the church.

The reputation of the military skill and experience of Valentinian had promoted his accession to the throne; the state of public events justified the motive, and the conduct of Valentinian sanctioned the choice of his subjects. During the twelve years of his reign, his firmness and vigilance protected his own dominions, and his genius inspired the feeble councils of his brother. The method of annals might distract, by a desultory narrative, the attention of the reader; a separate view of the five great theatres of war, 1. Germany; 2. Britain; 3. Africa; 4. The East; and 5. the Danube, will impress a more distinct image of the military state of the empire under the reigns of Valentinian and Valens.

I. The ambassadors of the Alemanni had been offended by the behaviour of the master of the offices, who had diminished the usual presents on the accession of an emperor: They communicated their sense of the affront to their countrymen, who ravaged the provinces of Gaul, and retired with their booty before they could be intercepted. The ensuing year, during the severity of

A. D. 365.

A. D. 366.

January.

A a 2

winter,

winter, the whole military force of the nation broke through the barrier of the Rhine. Two Roman counts were defeated and mortally wounded, and the standard of the Batavians fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Batavians regained their standard, but retrieved not their honour in the eyes of Valentinian. This severe judge ordered the Batavians, whom he had encircled with the rest of the imperial army, to be degraded from their rank, stripped of their arms, and sold for slaves to the highest bidders. The unhappy victims of his resentment implored the indulgence of another trial against the enemy; Valentinian consented with affected reluctance: The command, after being declined by Dagalaiphus, was accepted by Jovinus, who obtained a decisive advantage over the scattered barbarians; at Scarponna, in the territory of Metz, he surprised a large division of the Alemanni; a still more considerable army of the barbarians was unexpectedly attacked by the Roman general, as they were bathing in the stream, or reposing on the banks of the Moselle. A multitude of the bravest warriors were instantly pierced by the swords and javelins of the legionaries; and the fugitives, escaping to the camp near Chalons, prepared to encounter with united force the victorious lieutenant of Valentinian. The bloody conflict lasted a whole summer's duty; the Alemanni

manni were at length defeated with the slaughter of ten thousand men; and the victorious general, Jovinus, received from his sovereign the ensigns of the consulship. But the triumph of the Romans was disgraced by the murder of the captive king; and the subsequent assassination of the son of Vandomair, a prince of a delicate constitution but daring spirit, was a deliberate violation of the laws of humanity and justice.

When Valentinian considered the Alemanni as humbled, he was provoked by the surprisal of Metz by Rando, a bold Barbarian, who, after plundering the city, retired with his booty. The exasperated emperor resolved to avenge himself on the whole nation: Count Sebastian was ordered to invade the country on the side of Rhætia; and the emperor, accompanied by his son Gratian, crossed the Rhine at the head of a formidable army. The Alemanni fixed their camp on a lofty mountain; Valentinian, as he explored a secret pass, scarce escaped from an ambuscade of the barbarians by spurring his horse down a steep and slippery descent, and was obliged to leave behind him his armour-bearer and magnificent helmet. The insult was effaced by the assault of the Roman troops, who ascended the mountain on three different sides, and uniting their forces on the summit, urged the barbarians

down the northern side, where count Sebastian intercepted their retreat. The emperor, after his victory, retired to Treves, and provided for the future defence of the frontier, by fortifying with labour and art the banks of the Rhine from its source to the streights of the ocean.

To distract the future attention of the Alemanni, the emperor excited against them
A. D. 371. the Burgundians, who inhabited the countries on either side the Elbe. An army of fourscore thousand men appeared on the banks of the Rhine, and claimed the promised subsidies from the Roman monarch. They were amused with excuses and delays, and compelled, after a fruitless expectation, to retire. Their hereditary feuds with the Alemanni still continued; and Valentinian might rather wish to intimidate the latter than to destroy them.

The sea-coast of Gaul and Britain was exposed to the depredations of the Saxons, who, from the present duchy of Sleswig, harrassed and afflicted the maritime provinces. Severus, the master general of the infantry, was called by the count, to whom it had been assigned, to the defence of the sea-coast or Armorican limit. The Saxons surrounded, were forced to relinquish their spoil, and to yield a select number of their youth to serve in the imperial army. But the retreat they had stipulated for, was violated by the perfidy of the
Roman

Roman general; the undaunted Saxons were betrayed into an ambuscade, and their valour overwhelmed by the number of their enemies.

II. The Roman province of Britain was reduced to a state of civilization and servitude; but the northern region, called Caledonia, was inhabited by the two tribes of Scots and Picts. The former were the men of the hills, the latter those of the plain; the incursions of both had long increased the calamities which the British subjects of the empire too frequently experienced from the rapacity of their governors. The commanders of the province were surprised and cut off

A. D.

by the barbarians; and, after a long

367. 370.

consultation, Valentinian intrusted the defence of Britain to the abilities of the brave Theodosius.

He crossed the channel in a favourable moment of navigation, and at the head of the veteran bands of the Heruli and Batavians, the Jovians and Victors, pursued his successful

A. D.

march from Sandwich to London. In

368, 369.

two campaigns his prudent spirit and consummate art rescued every part of the province from the rapacious enemy; the splendor of the cities and the strength of the fortifications were restored, and the trembling Caledonians were confined to the northern angle of the island. On his return, Theodosius was appointed master-general of the ca-

A a 4

valry;

valry; as commander on the Upper Danube he defeated the Alemanni, and was afterwards chosen to suppress the revolt of Africa.

III. Africa had long been governed, or rather oppressed, by count Romanus; his abilities were considerable, but his avarice exceeded his capacity, and he suffered the barbarians with impunity to ravage the province, the treasures of which he diverted to his own use. The unhappy provincials in vain implored the justice and protection of the emperor; the guilty governor, by splendid presents, cultivated the friendship of his ministers; and Romanus was continued in his command till the Africans, provoked by his covetousness, joined the rebellious standard of Firmus, the Moor.

Nabal, the father of Firmus, was one of the richest Moorish princes who acknowledged the supremacy of Rome; his wealthy inheritance was disputed by a numerous posterity, and Zamma, one of the sons of Nabal, was slain in a domestic quarrel by his brother Firmus. Romanus pursued the culprit with an implacability, which assured him he must either submit to the executioner, or appeal to his sword and the people. He was received as the deliverer of his country; the authority of Romanus became contemptible, and the power of Firmus was established, at least, throughout Fez and Mauritania.

But

But on the appointment of Theodosius, the timid usurper sunk under the ascendant of virtue and military genius. Though A. D. 373. Firmus possessed arms and treasures, he confided in the practice of his native arts; but the vigilance of Theodosius was not to be deceived by an apparent submission. A dark conspiracy was detected, and the accomplices of Firmus were either punished by death, or rendered objects of horror by the amputation of both their hands. In vain did Firmus hope to secure his retreat amidst the boundless plains of Getulia, or the numerous valleys of Mount Atlas; Theodosius was determined the war should only end with the death of the tyrant. With a select band of three thousand five hundred soldiers, the Roman general penetrated into the heart of the country; the barbarians were disconcerted by the boldness and prudence of his conduct; and the body of Firmus, who, hopeless of escape, had strangled himself, was delivered by Igmazen, king of the Isaffenfes, to the persevering general of Valentinian.

Africa had been lost by the vices of Romanus; it was regained by the virtues of Theodosius. Yet Romanus, by the influence of a favourite, escaped the punishment due to his A. D. 376. crimes; and the restorer of Africa and Britain, after the death of Valentinian, was ignominiously

miniously beheaded at Carthage, on a vague suspicion that his services were superior to the rank of a subject.

IV. By the treaty of Jovian, the Romans had solemnly renounced the sovereignty and alliance of the kingdoms of Armenia and Iberia. Sapor, at

A. D. 365. 373. the head of a formidable host, entered the territories of Armenia, possessed himself by treachery of the person of Tiranus, whose life was soon terminated by despair or assassination, and reduced the kingdom to the state of a Persian province. After expelling Sauromaces, who reigned under the protection of the Romans, from Iberia, he placed the crown of that country on the head of his vassal Aspacuras. But the Persian monarch was soon convinced, it was more easy to over-run than to retain a country naturally hostile: A numerous and active party acknowledged Para, the son of Tiranus, as the lawful sovereign of Armenia; and the Iberians compelled Aspacuras to divide the kingdom with his rival Sauromaces. Valens, with slow and cautious measures, ventured to support the Roman party in Armenia and Iberia; twelve legions marched to establish the authority of Sauromaces; a powerful army, commanded by count Trajan, encamped on the confines of Armenia. These appearances of war gave way to a long negociation. Though the invasion

vasion of the Goths and Huns afterwards exposed the provinces of Asia to the arms of Sapor, the declining age of the monarch inspired him with maxims of moderation. His death, A. D. 383. after a reign of seventy years, delivered the Romans from their ancient enemy; and the domestic troubles which ensued, engaged the attention of the court and councils of Persia.

The adventures and fate of Para form a singular and disgraceful object in the reign of Valens: By the timid councils of that monarch, the son of Tiranus was repeatedly supported and recalled. But Para considered himself as the independent sovereign of Armenia, and escaped from the vigilance of the Romans, who had persuaded him to trust to their professions, and who endeavoured to detain him as their prisoner. After his return to his native kingdom he still continued to profess himself the ally of Rome, but Valens had injured him too deeply ever to forgive. By the command of the emperor, count Trajan invited the unsuspecting Para to a sumptuous entertainment; the imperial table was stained with the royal blood of a guest and an ally; and the weak and wicked councils of the Romans proclaimed a corrupted and declining empire.

V. During an interval of thirty years, the Goths had extended their dominions. Hermanric, king
of

of the Ostrògoths, had persuaded the independent tribes to acknowledge him as the sovereign of the Gothic nation : The chiefs of the Visigoths had renounced the royal title to assume the appellation of judges. Among these, Athanaric, Fritigern, and Alavivus were the most illustrious. The ambitious designs of Hermanric were enlarged ; he subdued the Venedi, who filled the plains of modern Poland ; the Heruli, who inhabited the marshy lands near the lake Mæotis ; the Æstii, whose name is still preserved by the province of Æstho-nia ; and nine other considerable nations. The Goths had embraced the party of Procopius ; an army was detached to his assistance, but before it could join his standard, the rebel was no more. The generals of Valens cut off the subsistence, and intercepted the retreat of the barbarians, who were compelled to submit to the mercy of the conqueror, and were distributed through the cities of Asia. The spirit of Hermanric resented the calamities of his countrymen ; he demanded with menaces the release of the captives : a decent refusal was at first signified, but the manly exhortations of Valentinian animated his brother to vindicate the insulted majesty of the empire.

Hermanric resigned this defensive war to the conduct of the brave Athanaric ; and Valens in

A. D. person passed the Danube on a bridge
367, 368, 369. of boats. Two campaigns were made
by

by the Romans with doubtful and indecisive success: but the third year was attended by the defeat of Athanaric; and the pursuit of the Goths was rendered more bloody by the precaution of the victorious generals, who had promised a large reward for the head of every Goth. The barbarians submitted; the terms of peace were adjusted by Valens and Athanaric, who met in their respective barges in the middle of the Danube. The freedom of trade which the Goths had hitherto enjoyed, was restricted to two cities on the Danube; and their leaders, Athanaric excepted, were deprived for their rashness of their pensions and subsidies. The Goths remained in a state of tranquillity about six years, till impelled against the empire by the host of Scythians, who seemed to issue from the frozen region of the north.

Valentinian had reserved for his immediate care, the defence of the Rhætian and Illyrian provinces. The new fortifications he erected sometimes trespassed on the territories of the barbarians, and excited their murmurs; their complaints were treated with contempt by Marcellinus, the worthless son of Maximin, the inhuman præfect of Gaul. The bloody treachery of Marcellinus was exercised in the murder of Gabinius, the king of the Quadi. The Roman affected to listen to the remonstrances

A. D. 374.

ces of the German monarch, invited him to an entertainment, and assassinated him in the unsuspecting moment of conviviality. The fate of Gabinius in the west, was the same as that of Para in the east; but the hardy Quadi resented the death of their sovereign far differently from the timid Armenians. The veteran legions had been drawn away to suppress the revolt of Firmus, and the barbarians invaded Pannonia in the season of the harvest. The daughter of the emperor Constantius, whose name had been used to support the cause of Procopius, and who was now the destined wife of the heir of the western empire, narrowly escaped from their pursuit, and with difficulty reached Sirmium. Even Sirmium possibly would have yielded in the moment of consternation, had not the courage of the citizens been revived by the presence of Probus, the Prætorian præfect. Two legions, while they disputed the vain honours of precedence, were surprised and slaughtered; and the invasion of the neighbouring tribes endangered the province of Mæsia, which was preserved by young Theodosius, duke of that frontier, who displayed a courage worthy of his father, and of his future greatness.

Valentinian, who resided at Treves, was afflicted with the calamities of Illyricum:
A. D. 375. in the ensuing spring he marched in person

person with a considerable part of the forces of Gaul; and to the suppliant ambassadors of the Sarmatians, returned the answer, that as soon as he reached the scene of action, he should examine and pronounce. But forgetting the provocation, he remembered only the injury; and advancing into the country of the Quadi, he involved it in universal devastation and a promiscuous massacre. Such was the discipline of the Romans, and the consternation of the enemy, that Valentinian repassed the Danube without the loss of a single man. To complete the destruction of the country, he fixed his quarters at Bregetio, near the Hungarian city of Presburgh. While the emperor planned the operations of future war, the ambassadors of the Quadi, by the representation of Equitius, were introduced into the imperial presence. They affirmed that the late invasion was the crime of some irregular robbers; but the answer of Valentinian left them but little to hope from his clemency. He reviled in the most intemperate language their baseness and insolence: but while his voice and gestures expressed the violence of his fury, a blood vessel burst in his body, and Valentinian fell speechless into the arms of his attendants; in a few minutes the emperor of the west expired in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and having nearly completed the twelfth year of his reign.

A. D. 375.

Nov.

Gratian.

Gratian, who was the eldest son of Valentinian by his first wife Severa, was in the seventeenth year of his age; he had married the daughter of Constantius, and had already received from his father the title of Augustus. But Gratian, when Valentinian expired, was in the palace of Treves, many hundred miles distant from the camp of Bregetio. The soldiers, who occupied that camp, were influenced by Mellobaudes and Equitius, who commanded the Illyrian and Italian bands; and an infant prince, only four years old, the son of Valentinian by his second wife Justina, was invested, by military acclamations, with the titles of supreme power. The temperate prudence of Gratian induced him to acquiesce in the choice of the army, and to dissemble his resentment till he could securely punish the authors of the conspiracy. He advised Justina, and her infant son Valentinian, to fix their residence at Milan, while he assumed the more arduous command of the countries beyond the Alps; but though he behaved with uniform tenderness towards his colleague, he gradually confounded the office of a guardian with the authority of a sovereign. The Roman world was governed in the joint names of Valens, Gratian, and Valentinian; but the power of Valens was confined to the east, nor was he suffered to interfere in the administration of the west.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MANNERS OF THE PASTORAL NATIONS — PROGRESS OF
THE HUNS FROM CHINA TO EUROPE — FLIGHT OF THE
GOTHS — THEY PASS THE DANUBE — GOTHIC WAR
— DEFEAT AND DEATH OF VALENS — GRATIAN
INVESTS THEODOSIUS WITH THE EASTERN
EMPIRE — HIS CHARACTER AND SUCCESS
— PEACE AND SETTLEMENT OF
THE GOTHS.

FROM the reign of Valens may be dated the Fall of the Roman empire. The invasion of the Huns impelled the Gothic nation on the provinces of the west: the original principle of motion was concealed in the remote countries of the north; and the latent causes of these emigrations may be illustrated, by considering the tribes of hunters and shepherds, who, in every age, have inhabited the immense plains of Scythia or Tartary; whose active valour has over-turned the thrones of Asia, and spread devastation through the countries of

VOL. I, B b Europe.

Europe. In reviewing a nation of shepherds and warriors, the important articles of their diet, their habitations, and their exercises, are worthy observation.

The shepherds of the north, too indolent to cultivate the earth, depend for their subsistence on their numerous flocks and herds: These accompany them in their march; and the luxuriant vegetation of the grass in the uncultivated waste, affords sufficient pasture for the hardy cattle. The singular taste of the savages of Scythia for horse flesh, facilitates their military operations; in their rapid incursions, the cavalry is always followed by an adequate number of spare horses, which may be used to redouble the speed, or satisfy the hunger of the barbarians. In a hasty march they provide themselves with little balls of hard curd, which they dissolve in water; and this unsubstantial diet will support for many days the life and even spirits of the patient Tartar.

The houses of the Tartars are small oval tents, which afford a promiscuous habitation for both sexes; the palaces of the rich, which consist of wooden huts, may be drawn on a waggon by a team of oxen. As soon as the forage of a certain district is consumed, the tribe marches to fresh pastures; their choice of stations is regulated by the seasons, and the active and restless spirit of the
Tartar

Tartar calculates him habitually for emigration and conquest.

The management of their herds is devolved on their captives while they themselves employ their hours in the amusements of the chace. In every age they have been celebrated as skilful riders, and their plains produce a strong and useful breed of horses : they excel in the management of the lance and the bow ; and it is easy to transfer to the annoyance of a human enemy, that patience and skill which have long been exercised in the destruction of wild beasts.

The vagrant tribes or hords of Scythia were united by various permanent causes under a supreme head, on whom they bestowed the title of *Khan*. Though they acknowledged hereditary succession, yet as it was the duty of a Tartar sovereign to lead his subjects to war, the claims of an infant were often disregarded, and some martial kinsman was entrusted with the royal authority. Two distinct and regular taxes were imposed, to support the dignity of the chief, and each amounted to the tythe both of their property and of their spoil. In describing the extent of Scythia, the whole longitude of it, from the mouth of the Danube to the sea of Japan, is about one hundred and ten degrees, or more than five thousand miles ; and in latitude, we may advance from the

fortieth degree, above one thousand miles, till we are stopped by the excessive cold of Siberia.

The Huns, who in the reign of Valens threatened the Roman empire, had, in a more early period, been formidable to that of China : Their original seat was, probably, a tract of country on the north side of the great wall. The valour of the Huns extended their narrow limits ; but their prosperity was interrupted by a variety of revolutions ; and before the end of the first christian æra, the power of their Tanjous, or princes, which had entirely extended over the empire of China, was utterly destroyed. The most pusillanimous of the Huns mingled with their conquerors the Sienpi, a tribe of Oriental Tartars ; fifty-eight hords implored the protection of China, and were appointed to guard the province of Chansi, and the territory of Ortous : but the more warlike tribes of the Huns maintained the undaunted spirit of their ancestors ; and in two great divisions, directed their march towards the Oxus and towards the Volga. The first of these colonies, afterwards called the *White Huns*, established themselves in Sogdiana, and abandoned their pastoral life for permanent habitations : their vicinity to Persia often involved them in wars with that monarchy ; and in a memorable victory over
Firuz,

Firuz, they displayed their valour and moderation.

The second division of the Huns advanced towards the north-west; and in their laborious march, their native fierceness was augmented by their intercourse with the savage tribes. Their independent spirit rejected the hereditary succession of the Tanjous; each hord was governed by its peculiar *Murfa*, or father, and the council of the *Murfas* directed the measures of the whole nation. A dark interval elapsed, after the Huns of the Volga were lost to the Chinese, before they shewed themselves to the Romans. After crossing the Volga to the west, they invaded the plains between the Volga and the Tanais, covered with the tents of the Alani, a race of barbarians less savage and deformed, but not less martial and independent than the Huns. The banks of the Tanais beheld the triumph of the Huns over the collected force of the Alani: the greatest part of the vanquished incorporated themselves with the victors; and the Huns, with augmented numbers and confidence, proceeded to invade the limits of the Gothic empire.

The great Hermanric was alarmed by this formidable host of unknown enemies; and he soon discovered his vassal tribes, provoked by oppression, were more inclined to second than to repel

the invaders. The punishment of the innocent wife of one of the chiefs, who had deserted the standard of the Gothic tyrant, was avenged by the brothers of the unfortunate woman. The aged king of the Goths, after languishing some time, died of the wound they inflicted. The reins

A. D. 375. of government, on his death, were left

in the hands of Withimer, who, with some Scythian auxiliaries, was defeated and slain in a decisive battle by the Huns and Alani. The person of Witheric, the infant king, was saved by the diligence of Alatheus and Saphrax, two warriors of approved fidelity; these conducted the remaining Ostrogoths toward the Niefter, a river which now separates the Turkish and Russian dominions, and on the banks of which Athanaric had fixed the camp of the Visigoths. A detachment of cavalry belonging to the Huns, passed the river at a ford by the light of the moon, and encompassed and attacked Athanaric, who, with difficulty, retreated into the hilly country. A judicious plan of defensive war, which he had formed, was disappointed by the impatience of his trembling countrymen, who were persuaded that the barrier of the Danube alone could save them from the barbarians of Scythia. Athanaric, who had formerly sworn never to set his foot on the territory of the empire, retired with a faithful band of followers

followers into the mountainous country of Caucal-land ; and the body of the nation of Visigoths, led by Fritigern and Alavivus, advanced to the banks of the Danube, to implore the protection of the emperor of the east.

Valens, after terminating the Gothic war, had fixed his residence at Anti-och, when he was informed by the officers who guarded the Danube, that the north was agitated by a furious tempest ; that a monstrous race of savages, called Huns, had subverted the power of the Goths, who, with pathetic lamentations, implored the protection of the Roman government, and requested the permission of cultivating the waste lands of Thrace, and to become the obedient subjects and faithful protectors of the republic. The mind of Valens, no longer guided by the wisdom and authority of his brother, who had expired towards the end of the preceding year, was alarmed and perplexed. The distressful situation of the Goths, which required a peremptory decision, precluded delay, the favourite resource of feeble minds ; the ministers whom he consulted, applauded the liberality of fortune, which had conducted, from the most distant countries of the globe, an army of strangers, to defend the throne of Valens. The prayers of the Goths were granted, and the governors of the Thracian diocese were

were ordered to make necessary preparations for the passage and subsistence of a great people, till a proper territory could be allotted for their future residence. But two conditions were annexed to the imperial liberality ; the Goths, before they passed the Danube, were to deliver their arms, and their children were to be dispersed through, and educated in, the provinces of Asia.

The Goths, during the interval of the negotiation, had made several attempts to pass the Danube ; they had been as constantly repulsed by the vigilant officers of the frontier. The imperial mandate was at length received, and the whole mass of the Gothic people, of both sexes and of all ages, amounting to near a million, was transported with labour and difficulty over the great river. The children, at least those of a distinguished rank, were conducted without delay to the seats assigned for their residence and education : but the stipulation most important, was shamefully eluded ; the barbarians, who considered their arms as the ensign of their honour and the pledges of their safety, consented to prostitute their wives and daughters, or to surrender their wealth, to purchase the connivance of the inspectors. The Goths were permitted to enter the boats with arms ; and when collected, on the other side of the river, their camp, which spread over the plains and hills
of

of Mæfia, assumed a threatening aspect. Alatheus and Saphrax, the leaders of the Ostrogoths, with their infant king, soon appeared on the banks of the Danube, and in vain endeavoured to obtain from the favour of Valens, the same indulgence which had been incautiously granted to the Visigoths.

At this crisis, when an unsettled nation of barbarians required the firmest temper and the most dextrous management, the military government of Thrace was exercised by Lupicinus and Maximus, two men equally destitute of capacity and integrity. To gratify their own avarice, they studiously augmented the wants of the barbarians, who, when their property was exhausted, were compelled to purchase a temporary subsistence, even by the sale of their sons and daughters. A spirit of discontent prevailed through the camp of the barbarians, who loudly complained of the hostile conduct of their new allies. The clamours of the multitude alarmed the guilty Lupicinus and Maximus; they attempted to disperse the Goths through the interior provinces, and to urge the compliance of the barbarians by the terrors of a military force. In collecting an army, they disarmed the ships and fortifications which defended the Danube. The vigilant Alatheus and Saphrax seized the opportunity; on rafts and such

such vessels as could be instantly procured, they transported over the river their army and their king, and pitched their independent camp on the territories of the empire.

Though Alavivus and Fritigern possessed at first an equal authority over the Visigoths, yet the superior qualities of Fritigern soon assumed the military command: He courted the friendship, and united under the same standard, the Ostrogoths; and proceeded by slow marches towards Marcianopolis, the capital of lower Mæsia, about seventy miles from the Danube. Lupicinus invited to an entertainment the leaders of the Goths; their martial train remained under arms at the entrance of the palace. The gates of the city were strictly guarded, and the barbarians excluded from the use of a plentiful market. The derision of the townsmen inflamed their indignation; blows succeeded, and swords were at length drawn. Lupicinus was informed by a messenger, that many of his soldiers were slain; and he issued a command to revenge their deaths, by a massacre of the guards of Fritigern and Alavivus. The clamorous shouts and dying groans apprised Fritigern of his danger. "A trifling dispute," said the Gothic leader, "appears to have arisen between the two nations; but it may be productive of the most dangerous consequences, unless

“ unless the tumult is immediately pacified by the
“ assurance of our safety, and the authority of our
“ presence.” At these words, Fritigern and his
companions drew their swords, and forced their
passage through the streets and gates of Marciano-
polis : They were received by the Gothic camp
with loud acclamations, and the hostile banners
of the barbarians were instantly displayed. Lupi-
cinus, at the head of such a military force as he
could hastily collect, encountered the Goths about
nine miles from Marcianopolis ; the day was ad-
verse to the Romans, and the ineffectual valour
of the soldiers served only to procure to them-
selves an honourable death, and to protect the
ignominious flight of their guilty leader. The
barbarians instantly spread their devastations
through the province of Thrace ; and their course
was marked by the conflagration of villages, and
the mangled bodies of the inhabitants.

The report of the Gothic victory was soon dif-
fused over the adjacent country ; and the minis-
ters of Valens were anxious to remove beyond the
Hellespont, a numerous body of Goths, who had
been received into the service of the empire, and
were encamped under the walls of Hadrianople.
But the hostile threats with which the first magi-
strate of Hadrianople, at the head of an armed
but undisciplined multitude, urged their departure,
provoked

provoked the indignant barbarians; they presently dispersed, and despoiled of their armour the unwarlike populace. On the arrival of Fritigern, they ranged themselves under his standard, and signalized their ardour in the siege of Hadrianople. But Fritigern soon discovered, that in the attack of fortifications, the efforts of courage alone are seldom effectual; and raising the siege, he revenged his disappointment by the destruction of the adjacent country.

Valens, on the intelligence of the rebellion of the Goths, declared his resolution of marching against them, and solicited the assistance
A. D. 370. of his nephew, the emperor of the west. Richomer, the count of the domestics, was dispatched by Gratian with the Gallic legions, considerably reduced by desertion; and joined, in Thrace, Trajan and Profuturus, who were entrusted with the conduct of the Gothic war during the absence of Valens. The generals, in council, resolved to seek and encounter the barbarians, who had encamped in the meadows near the southern mouth of the Danube. Fritigern, whose vigilant eye beheld the imperial forces encamping, recalled to his standard his scattered detachments. The undaunted courage of the Goths was opposed by the skill and discipline of the Romans; the conflict was supported, with alternate success,

success, from dawn of day to a late hour of evening; and when the two armies retreated to their respective camps, neither of them could claim the honours or the effects of a decisive victory. The inferior number of the Romans rendered them less able to support the real loss; but the Goths, confounded at the unexpected resistance, remained seven days within the fortification of their waggons.

The imperial generals, grown prudent from experience, adopted the more rational plan of confining and destroying the barbarians by famine, by a chain of well-chosen posts. The design was prosecuted with skill and diligence by Saturninus, the master-general of the cavalry; but the system was interrupted by the alarming information that new swarms of hostile nations had passed the Danube. The sagacious Fritigern had cemented an alliance with Saphrax and Alatheus, the leaders of the Ostrogoths; he had obtained the aid of the Taifalæ, a people as celebrated for their military virtues as disgraced by the public infamy of their unnatural amours. But his most powerful auxiliaries were drawn from his former enemies, the Huns and the Alani; several hords of whom, allured by the promises of Fritigern, joined the Scythian cavalry to the Gothic infantry, and by their union rendered more formidable the host of the barbarians.

During

During the distractions of the east, the emperor Gratian in the west was engaged in a serious and bloody contest with the Alemanni. The
A. D. 387 intelligence that Gratian was preparing to lead his forces to the assistance of Valens, pointed out to the restless Alemanni the moment of successful invasion: They passed the Rhine on the ice with some small detachments, and the military power of the nation, amounting to forty thousand men, rapidly followed. The legions which had been ordered into Pannonia were immediately recalled; and the youthful emperor took the field, accompanied by the experienced Nanienus and Mellobaudes, who united in his person the characters of count of the domestics and king of the Franks. In the plains of Alsace, the well-practiced evolutions of the Romans triumphed over the valour of the Alemanni, five thousand only of whom, after the death of their king, escaped into the woods and mountains. The emperor pursued his victory into the country of the Alemanni: the barbarians sued for peace; and the conduct of Gratian, whose courage, at the age of nineteen, was distinguished in the foremost ranks, inspired his subjects with the hopes of a long and auspicious reign.

While Gratian enjoyed the applause of his people, the emperor Valens was received at Constantinople

tinople with murmurs and reproaches. He was urged by the clamours of the multitude, to march against the barbarians, whom he had incautiously admitted into his dominions; and the insults of the presumptuous citizens, provoked the fatal rashness of Valens, and hastened the downfall of the Roman empire. The mind of the emperor was elated by the achievements of his lieutenants; the valiant Frigerid had intercepted and defeated the Taifalæ, whose king was slain in battle. Sebastian, master-general of the infantry, at the head of a select detachment, had surprised a large body of the Goths in their camp, and the immense spoil he recovered filled the city of Hadrianople and the adjacent plain. These splendid exploits excited the emulation of Valens; he considered victory as certain, and having strengthened his army by a numerous reinforcement of veterans, he conducted his march from Constantinople to Hadrianople, with a skill which prevented the hostile activity of the barbarians.

The camp of Valens was pitched under the walls of Hadrianople, and a council assembled to decide the fate of the emperor and the empire. The obsequious eloquence of Sebastian prevailed, who represented every doubt of victory as unworthy the majesty of the Roman monarch. The secret arts of Frigern precipitated the ruin of Valens;

Valens ; he declared, he was willing to employ his arms in the defence of the empire, if he could secure for his countrymen a settlement on the waste lands of Thrace : but as he doubted the ready consent of the barbarians, he expressed his wish that the treaty might be supported by the terrors of an imperial army. Count Richomer, who returned from the west at the same time, informed the emperor of the east, that his nephew, Gratian, having triumphed over the Alemanni, was advancing, by hasty marches, at the head of his victorious legions, to insure by his junction the success of the Gothic war. But Valens was actuated by a fatal pride of jealousy ; he disdained the advice, and rejected the aid of his youthful kinsman ; and soothed with the vain dream of conquest, rushed headlong on death and destruction.

On the ninth of August, the emperor, leaving
A. D. 378, his baggage and military treasure under
August 9th. a strong guard, marched from Hadrianople to attack the Goths, who were encamped about twelve miles from the city. By some mistake, the right wing arrived in sight of the enemy, whilst the left was at a considerable distance ; and the soldiers of the latter, in endeavouring to quicken their pace, were thrown into unavoidable confusion. While Fritigern anxiously expected the re-
turn

turn of the Gothic cavalry, which had been detached to forage in the adjacent country, he continued to practise his former arts; and during some hours of fruitless negociation, the Romans, exhausted by hunger and thirst, were exposed to the rays of a burning sun. The return of the Gothic squadrons commanded by Alatheus and Saphrax was the signal for battle; the imperial cavalry fled before them; the Roman infantry, abandoned and surrounded on every side, was broken and cut to pieces. The emperor Valens, wounded and deserted by his guards, sought protection among the Lancearii and Mattiarii, who still maintained their ground. His generals, Trajan and Victor, apprised of his danger, flew with a small body of troops to his rescue; but on piercing to the spot, they found only broken arms and mangled bodies, without being able to discover their prince dead or alive. Several historians relate that Valens, by his attendants, was removed from the field of battle to a neighbouring cottage, which, while they endeavoured to dress his wound, was attempted by the enemy, who provoked by a discharge of arrows, set fire to an adjacent pile of faggots, and with the cottage, consumed the emperor of the east. A boy who escaped from a window, alone survived to inform the barbarians of the inestimable prize they had lost by their rashness. In the unfortunate

battle of Hadrianople, besides the emperor, two master-generals of the cavalry and infantry, two great officers of the palace, thirty-five tribunes, and two-thirds of the Roman army perished ; and the remainder was only saved by the approach of night, and the calm courage which Victor and Richomer displayed amidst the general consternation.

The pride of the Goths was elated by their victory, but their avarice was disappointed by the obstinate resistance of Hadrianople, in which the greatest part of the imperial wealth had been secured. After an impolitic massacre of three hundred deserters, the indignant barbarians raised the siege, and poured from the walls of Hadrianople to the suburbs of Constantinople. While they gazed with admiration on the splendid capital of the east, a party of Saracens engaged in the service of the Romans, sallied from one of the gates ; the cavalry of Scythia yielded to the swiftness and spirit of the Arabian horses, and the Goths were dismayed, when they beheld a naked Arab apply his lips to the wound, and suck the blood, of a Gothic soldier whom he had slain. The northern barbarians retired from the inaccessible ramparts of Constantinople, and possessing themselves of the narrow pass of Succa in the defiles of Mount Hæmus, they spread themselves over a
fertile

fertile country, as far as the confines of Italy and the Hadriatic sea.

On the first reception of the Goths into the empire, their sons had been distributed through the cities of the east; these youths had betrayed their wishes to imitate the glorious example of their fathers. The death of Valens had left the east without a sovereign; and Julius, the master-general of the troops, after he had received discretionary powers from the senate, concerted with the principal officers effectual measures for extirpating the Gothic

A. D. 378.

youth in Asia. These, under the pretence of receiving a liberal grant of lands and money, were collected into the forum of every city: the streets and avenues were lined with Roman troops; at the same hour, throughout the cities of the east, the sons of the Goths were the victims of an indiscriminate slaughter; and the perfidious, but perhaps necessary, policy of Julius delivered the Romans from this dangerous and domestic enemy.

The emperor Gratian was far advanced on his march toward the plains of Hadrianople, when he was informed by Victor and Richomer of the fate of his colleague, and the destruction of two-thirds of the Roman army. The modest youth felt himself unequal to the support of a sinking world; a formidable host of Germans threatened

to overwhelm the provinces of Gaul ; the government of the east required the presence of a hero and a statesman ; and the emperor invested with the purple the great Theodosius, then an exile, and whose father, the restorer of Britain and Gaul, had suffered only three years before, an unjust and ignominious death under the authority of Gratian himself.

Theodosius, who had early distinguished himself in Mæsia by vanquishing an army of the Sarmatians, after the melancholy fate of his father had retired to cultivate his patrimony between Valla-

A. D. 379.

Jan. 19.

dolid and Segovia ; from thence he was called to receive the imperial ensigns at Sirmium. To the former dominions of the eastern empire were added, with the conduct of the Gothic war, the dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia ; and Theodosius, with the general admiration and approbation of the Roman world, in the thirty-third year of his age, was honoured with the title of Augustus, and ascended the throne of the east.

The GREAT Theodosius, for by that honourable epithet he was afterwards distinguished, fixed his head quarters at Theffalonica, the capital of the Macedonian diocese. Instead of attempting to encounter in any decisive battle the numerous host of the victorious barbarians, by an extensive
and

and well-concerted plan of operations A.D.
he defeated and cut off the separate 279. 382.
detachments of the enemy; the fortifications of the
cities were strengthened, discipline was again re-
vived; and confidence insensibly restored to the
Roman legions. The deliverance of the provin-
ces was rather the work of prudence than of va-
lour; and the new emperor never failed to seize
and improve every favourable opportunity: nor
could a long and dangerous disease divert his at-
tention from the public service. The death of
Fritigern dissolved the union of the barbarians,
who had hitherto submitted to the direction of his
superior genius: A spirit of discord arose among
the independent tribes and nations; Modar, a
prince of the royal blood of the Amali, was al-
lured to join the Roman standard; the illustri-
ous deserter soon obtained the rank of master-gene-
ral: He surprised an army of his countrymen
immersed in wine; and after a cruel slaughter of
the barbarians, returned with four thousand wag-
gons to the imperial camp. Even the re-union of
the Goths under Athanaric, who, driven from
the woods Caucaland, had at length passed the
Danube, contributed, by the policy of Theodo-
sius, to establish the peace of the empire. Age
had chilled the daring spirit of Athanaric, and he
listened to the fair proposal of an honourable

treaty. Theodosius entertained in Constantinople his new ally with the magnificence of a monarch. The barbarian prince observed with curious attention the variety of objects which attracted his notice. "I now behold," exclaimed he, "what I never could believe, the glories of this stupendous capital; the emperor of the Romans is without doubt a god upon earth, and the presumptuous man who dares to lift his hand against him is guilty of his own blood." The intemperance of the judge of the Visigoths did not long allow him to enjoy the splendours of Constantinople; but the policy of Theodosius erected a stately monument to his memory, and the whole army of Athanaric enlisted under the standard of the Roman empire. The submission of so large a body alarmed each independent chieftain, who
A. D. 382. hastened to conclude a separate treaty;
October. and the final capitulation of the Goths may be dated four years and near two months after the death of the emperor Valens.

The restless spirit of the Ostrogoths, under Alatheus and Saphrax, had sought new scenes of rapine and glory; their destructive course had been pointed towards the west: after an interval of four years, in which they had concluded and violated a treaty with the emperor Gratian, they returned

turned with accumulated force to the banks of the Danube. The artifices of the general who commanded on the Thracian frontier precipitated the destruction of the barbarians; by the dexterity of his spies, he allured them to attempt the passage of the Danube in a dark night, in hopes of surprizing the sleeping army of the Romans: but when they had nearly reached the southern bank of the river, in the confidence that they should find an easy landing, their progress was unexpectedly stopped by a triple line of vessels; and a fleet of gallies, urged down the stream by the oars and tide, sunk and dispersed the feeble canoes of the barbarians. Alatheus, their general, perished with his bravest troops; and though the last division of the embarkation might regain the opposite shore, yet destitute of counsel, and incapable of action, they soon implored the clemency of the victorious enemy.

The Visigoths obtained settlements in Thrace; the Ostrogoths in Phrygia and Lydia; and the barbarians procured the sole possession of the districts appointed for their residence: they cherished their native language and manners, rejected the laws and jurisdiction of the magistrates of Rome, and acknowledged alone the sovereignty of the emperor. An army of forty thousand Goths, main-

tained for the service of the eastern empire, assumed the title of *Fœderati*, or Allies, and were distinguished by their gold collars, liberal pay, and licentious privileges. Though the countenances of the barbarians were still hostile, yet experience encouraged the hope that they would hereafter acquire the habits of industry and obedience. These expectations were frequently disappointed; during the civil war against Maximus, a number of Gothic deserters retired into the morasses of Macedonia, wasted the adjacent country, and before they submitted, compelled the emperor to march against them in person: yet as the barbarians were not incapable of gratitude, several leaders devoted themselves to the support of the empire; and the nation was insensibly divided into two factions. The Goths who considered themselves the friends of Rome, were directed by Fravitta, an honourable youth, distinguished from his countrymen by his polite manners and liberal sentiments; the fierce Priulf asserted the independence of a more numerous band of followers. The fatal secret of their domestic disputes was betrayed, through intemperance, at the imperial table. The astonished emperor dissembled his resentment; but Fravitta, alarmed at the insolence of his rival, followed Priulf from the palace, and drawing his sword, laid him dead at his

his feet. The champion of Rome was protected from the superior number of his assailants by the interposition of the imperial guards; but these scenes of barbaric rage disgraced the palace, and excited the jealousy, of the emperor of the east.

CHAPTER XIX.

DEATH OF GRATIAN — RUIN OF ARIANISM — CIVIL
WAR AGAINST MAXIMUS — ADMINISTRATION
OF THEODOSIUS — DEATH OF VALENTI-
NIAN II. — CIVIL WAR AGAINST EUGE-
NIUS — DEATH OF THEODOSIUS —
DESTRUCTION OF PAGANISM,

THE early fame of Gratian was equal to that of the most celebrated princes ; before he accomplished his twentieth year, he had endeared himself by his amiable disposition, affable manners, his valour and dexterity in arms, to his friends, to his subjects, and to his soldiers. The five succeeding years of his reign undermined that reputation which had been established with so much care ; attentive observers discovered his apparent virtues rather to spring from a royal education, than to be the spontaneous growth of nature : his tractable temper allowed him to receive with facility the impressions of the faithful counsellors of his father ;
but

but when time or accident had removed these, he became equally open to the suggestions of less able and more ambitious ministers. The conscience of the credulous son of Valentinian was directed by saints and bishops, who considered the neglect of the divine law as the most capital crime : his person was entrusted to the care of the Alani ; he cultivated the esteem, and participated the amusements of these barbarian guards : his skill and boldness, which might be useful to a soldier, were vainly displayed in the chase ; and he insulted the public prejudice by frequently shewing himself to his army and people with the bow, the quiver, and fur garments of a Scythian warrior. Such a spectacle filled the legions with grief and indignation ; even the Germans affected to disdain the horrid appearance of the savages of the north, and regarded with disgust and discontent the unworthy partiality of the emperor of the west.

The revolt of Maximus in Britain soon decided the fate of Gratian. This bold candidate for imperial dignity was a native of Spain ; the countryman, the fellow-soldier, and the rival of Theodosius, whose elevation he had regarded with envy and resentment. The events of his life had long fixed him in Britain, and some doubtful testimonies have given him in marriage to the daughter of a lord of Caernarvonshire ; but whatever authority,

thority, civil or military, Maximus might have possessed in Britain, it is certain he was not invested with either that of governor or general. His discontent might incline him to censure the conduct of his sovereign, and encourage the murmurs of the soldiers, who in concert with the provincials, with a tumultuary but unanimous voice, proclaimed him emperor. If we give credit to his own declaration, he was compelled to accept the imperial purple; but the moment he had violated his allegiance, he extended his ambition beyond the limits of Britain, and wisely resolved to prevent the designs of Gratian. He invaded Gaul with a fleet and an army, which have long been remembered as the emigration of a considerable part of the British nation; and the armies of Gaul, instead of opposing the march of Maximus, received him with joyful acclamations. The standard of Gratian was abandoned even by the troops more particularly attached to the service of the palace, and the emperor of the west fled towards Lyons with a feeble train of three hundred horse. He might still have reached in safety the dominions of his brother, if he had not been amused and deceived by the perfidious protestations of the governor of the Lyonnese province. The arrival of Andragathius, the general of the cavalry of

A. D. 383. Maximus, put an end to his suspense;
 Aug. 25. and Gratian was delivered to the assassins.

fin.

sin, who boldly terminated by death a reign of eight years, during the latter part of which the son of Valentinian had forfeited the respect and confidence of the Roman world; with the emperor perished his powerful general Mellobaudes, the king of the Franks.

The rapid succession of these events rendered it impossible for Theodosius to march to the relief of his benefactor. His grief for the fate of Gratian was interrupted by the arrival of the principal chamberlain of Maximus. The usurper, by his ambassador, condescended to justify his conduct, and protested that the murder of Gratian had been perpetrated by the precipitate zeal of the soldiers. To Theodosius he offered in a firm tone the alternative of peace or war, and concluded with a declaration, that if his friendship was rejected, he was prepared to dispute in a field of battle the empire of the world.

Though the voice of honour and gratitude called aloud on Theodosius to revenge the fate of Gratian, to whose liberality he was indebted for the imperial diadem; though the principles of justice, and the artificial fabric of government, would receive a fatal shock from the impunity and successful usurpation of Maximus; yet these considerations were overbalanced by a sense of superior duties. The assassin of Gratian possessed the
most

most warlike provinces of the empire ; the east was exhausted by the Gothic war ; the barbarians of the north menaced the very existence of the Roman name ; and an innocent people would be involved in the punishment due alone to the crimes of the rebel. Theodosius accepted the alliance of the tyrant ; but he stipulated that Maximus should content himself with the countries beyond the Alps, and that the brother of Gratian should be secured in the sovereignty of Italy, Africa, and the western Illyricum.

The orthodox bishops who bewailed the death of Gratian, soon discovered that unfortunate youth had committed the sceptre of the east to a prince whose fervent zeal was supported by a more vigorous capacity. To Theodosius belongs the glory of subduing the Arian heresy, and abolishing the worship of idols in the Roman world. The orthodox faith of Theodosius was confirmed by an argument adapted to the meanest capacity: He had lately bestowed on his eldest son Arcadius the title of Augustus. The two princes were seated on a throne to receive the homage of their subjects ; Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, approached Theodosius with reverence, but accosted his son with familiarity. The indignant monarch gave orders that the rustic priest should be instantly driven from his presence ; but while the
guards

guards were thrusting him out, the dextrous Polemic exclaimed, "Such is the treatment, O emperor! which the king of heaven has prepared for those impious men who affect to worship the Father but refuse to acknowledge the equal majesty of his divine Son." Theodosius immediately embraced the bishop of Iconium, and never forgot the important lesson.

The emperor of the east, during the Gothic war, had received the sacrament of baptism from the orthodox bishop of Thessalonica; and by a solemn edict had proclaimed his own faith, and branded all who dissented from it with the name of heretics. His entrance into Constantinople after a successful campaign, at the head of a victorious army, confirmed the hopes of the catholics. He ejected from the archiepiscopal throne of the capital, the Arian Damophilus, and elevated in his place Gregory Nazianzen, the undaunted champion of the Nicene creed. The different churches throughout the east experienced the same fate; and this ecclesiastical revolution was conducted with so much discretion and vigour, that the religion of the emperor was established without tumult or bloodshed. But Gregory Nazianzen enjoyed only a short time his newly acquired dignity; the validity of his election was disputed, and

A. D. 380.

Feb. 28.

November 26.

and the humility of Gregory prompted
A. D. 381. him to a ready resignation. He was
succeeded by the senator Nectarius, recommended by his easy temper, and who was obliged to delay his consecration till he had received the rites of baptism.

A council at Constantinople completed the theological system of Nice; and the edicts of the emperor Theodosius denounced the most severe penalties against the ministers, the assemblies, and persons of the heretics. The sectaries were gradually disqualified for the possession of honourable and lucrative employments; yet the penal edicts of Theodosius were seldom enforced; and it was reserved for his colleague, Maximus, to shed the blood of his christian subjects on account of their

religious principles. Of the Priscilianists, whose rigid notions, by absolutely condemning the use of the marriage-bed, disturbed the peace of families, and even the tranquillity of the provinces of Spain, seven were tortured, condemned, and executed by the sentence of the Prætorian præfect.

Ambrose, descended from a noble family of Romans, had attained in the regular gradation of civil honours, the station of consular of Liguria, a province which included the imperial residence of Milan. At the age of thirty-four, before he had
received

received the sacrament of baptism, the governor, without art or intrigue, was unanimously saluted by the whole body of the people with the episcopal title, and the reluctant magistrate was compelled to undertake a spiritual office ill-suited to the occupations of his former life ; but the active force of his genius soon qualified him for ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and he condescended to direct the conscience of the emperors, and the administration of the empire. Gratian loved him as a father ; and on the death of that unfortunate prince, when Justina trembled for her own and her son's safety, Ambrose was twice dispatched to the court of Treves, and by his dexterity and eloquence contributed perhaps to check the ambition of Maximus and protect the peace of Italy.

But it was the misfortune of Justina, who administered in the name of her son Valentinian the affairs of Italy, to be attached to the Arian heresy. She proposed to the bishop to resign, for the religious service of the emperor, a single church either in the city or the suburbs of Milan. Ambrose, confiding in the cause of orthodoxy, declared his resolution to die rather than yield to the impious sacrilege. The people of Milan approved the sentiments of their archbishop, and openly insulted the Arian ecclesiastics ; even the devotions of the emperor and his mother, when publicly

performed, required the security of a military guard. The laws of the empire, some of which were inscribed with the name of Valentinian, still condemned the Arian heresy; but the influence of Justina procured an edict of toleration for these sectaries, and capital punishment was denounced against all who should infringe the imperial ordinance. The probable violation of this law by the inflexible spirit of Ambrose was succeeded by a sentence of banishment; but the intrepid archbishop refused to comply, and his refusal was supported by the zealous people: These guarded the sacred person of Ambrose, the gates of the cathedral, and the episcopal palace. After an ineffectual blockade by the reluctant imperial troops, and a splendid display of miracles by the pious archbishop, Justina and her Arian court were compelled to give way. The sovereign of Italy found himself unable to contend with the favourite of heaven; but in the advice of Theodosius, and in the hostile designs of Maximus, we must not omit that the powers of the earth seasonably interposed in the defence of Ambrose.

Maximus, who had employed the wealth extorted from Gaul, Spain, and Britain, in collecting a formidable army of barbarians, chiefly from Germany, secretly meditated the destruction of a youth whose government was abhorred by his catholic

tholic subjects. That he might occupy without resistance the Passes of the Alps, he pressed Dominus, the ambassador of Valentinian, to accept the aid of a considerable body of troops, for the service of a Pannonian war. Notwithstanding the doubts suggested by Ambrose, the offer was accepted by the incautious council of Milan. The march of the auxiliaries was guided by the ambassador, but the tyrant followed with silent footsteps in the rear; and the appearance of his cavalry first announced his hostile intentions to the sovereign of Italy. Justina and her son placed their only hopes in flight, and reached Aquileia in safety: but dreading the event of a siege, she resolved to implore the protection of Theodosius; and embarking in a harbour of Istria with Valentinian, she traversed the extent of the Hadriatic and Ionian seas, and at length landed at Theffalonica. The subjects of Valentinian readily submitted to the usurper; and the only resistance Maximus experienced was from Æmona, a small city situated on the verge of Italy.

Theodosius fixed the residence of his royal guests at Theffalonica, and soon visited that city, accompanied by the greatest part of his court and senate. The majority of his council proposed and approved the most decisive measures against the boundless ambition of Maximus; and their rea-

sons were seconded by the princess Galla, whose charms powerfully pleaded the cause of her brother Valentinian. The heart of Theodosius was

softened by the tears of beauty; and
A. D. 387.

the celebration of the royal nuptials was the assurance of war. The alliance of the Persian king was secured by treaties; and the disposition of the forces of the east distracted the attention of Maximus. A chosen body of troops, under the command of Arbogastes, might penetrate through the Rhætian provinces into the centre of Gaul; a powerful fleet in the harbours of Greece and Epirus menaced Italy, and endangered the security of Rome; and Theodosius himself, at the head of a brave and disciplined army, advanced to encounter the tyrant, who, after the siege of Æmona, had fixed his camp in the neighbourhood of Siscia, a city fortified by the rapid stream of the Save.

The superior genius of the emperor of the east, decided the fate of Maximus in the space of two

A. D. 388. months. The steady valour of the
June, August. Gauls and Germans was confounded by the dextrous evolutions of the cavalry of the Goths, the Huns, and the Alani. The tyrant himself appeared destitute of military skill and personal courage; his forces, commanded by his brother Marcellinus, were defeated in a sharp
conflict

conflict on the banks of the Save ; and Theodosius pressed forward with such diligence into the plain of Italy, that Maximus had scarce time to shut against the victor the gates of Aquileia. The disaffection of the garrison hastened the downfall of the usurper, who, disrobed of the imperial ornaments, was conducted to the camp of Theodosius, and was abandoned by the emperor to the vengeance of the soldiers, who instantly separated his head from his body. His son Victor, whom he had associated to the purple, died by the order of Arbogastes. Theodosius, after residing during the winter in Milan, made his triumphal entry into Rome in the ensuing spring.

In the success of the civil war, the clemency of Theodosius was conspicuous. The Moorish guards of the tyrant had been massacred in the moment of victory ; a few obnoxious criminals suffered the punishment of the laws : but the humanity of the emperor preserved, and his liberality supported, the aged mother and infant daughters of Maximus. The temperance and chastity of Theodosius are equally the subjects of deserved panegyric ; he enjoyed the pleasures of the table with moderation, and confined his amorous passions to their lawful object. His wisdom and his valour rendered his administration respectable to his subjects and his enemies ; and even amidst the

duties of his imperial station, he found some hours for the instructive amusement of reading, and the diligent study of history. Yet it must be acknowledged, when his mind was not engaged in some vigorous pursuit, he too frequently reposed on the lap of idolence; and a disposition hasty and choleric, obscured his generous pardon to the citizens of Antioch by the inhuman massacre of the people of Thessalonica.

The weight of the public impositions had increased the natural impatience of the citizens of Antioch, and their fury was discharged on the images of the imperial family. The tumult was suppressed by the arrival of a body of archers, and the punishment of Antioch was referred to the judgment of Theodosius. After a
A. D. 387. painful interval of twenty-four days, the general Hellebicus, and Cæsarius, master of the offices, declared the will of the emperor. The proud capital of Syria was stripped of its privileges and revenues, and degraded to the denomination of a village; the baths, the circus, and the theatres were shut, and the distribution of corn was abolished; commissioners were appointed to enquire into the guilt of individuals, and the noblest and most wealthy of the citizens of Antioch appeared before their tribunal in chains. But the ministers of the emperor obeyed with reluctance
his

his stern injunctions ; their compassion induced them once more to consult the will of their sovereign. The resentment of Theodosius had already subsided, and a free and general pardon restored Antioch from despair to her former splendour and ancient dignity.

Thessalonica, the metropolis of the Illyrian provinces, was protected by a numerous garrison. A beautiful boy belonging to Botheric, the general of those troops, had excited the impure desires of one of the charioteers of the circus. The brutal lover was thrown into prison by Botheric ; but the resentment of the populace for the punishment of their favourite, proved fatal to the unfortunate general. Botheric and several of his principal officers were inhumanly murdered ; and the emperor, then at Milan, was surprised with the intelligence of the insurrection and cruelty of the people of Thessalonica. Instead
A. D. 390.
of a temperate judicial enquiry, he condemned the inhabitants of the city to a promiscuous slaughter. In the execution of this sanguinary decree, artifice and the ready swords of the barbarians were employed. The people of Thessalonica were invited, in the name of their sovereign, to the games of the circus : the streets adjacent were lined with barbarian soldiers ; and in three hours, without discrimination of strangers or natives, of

guilt or innocence, fifteen thousand victims were sacrificed to the manes of Botheric. Ambrose, who had acquired an ascendant over the mind of Theodosius, heard of the massacre of Antioch with horror and anguish; he represented the enormity of the crime, and exacted from the emperor the humiliating condition of a public penance. After a delay of eight months, Theodosius was restored to the communion of the faithful; and the edict, which interposes an interval of thirty days between the sentence and the execution may be considered as the fruits of his repentance.

Though the defeat and death of the tyrant of Gaul had given Theodosius the possession of the Roman world, the generosity of that prince restored Valentinian to his former dominions; and adding to them the countries beyond the Alps recovered from Maximus, he withdrew to Constantinople. The empress Justina did not long survive her return to Italy; and her son, while his subjects contemplated with pleasure his dawning virtues, before he had accomplished his twentieth year, fell a victim to domestic treason. Arbogastes, by birth a Frank, had joined the standard and contributed to the victory of Theodosius: his services were rewarded by the appointment of master-general of the armies of Gaul; but this im-
portant

portant command insensibly sunk Valentinian into the dependent condition of a captive. After having in vain employed the mediation of Ambrose, the impatient emperor delivered to his general a paper which dismissed him from all his employments. "My authority," replied Arbogastes, "does not depend on the smile or the frown of a monarch;" and he contemptuously threw the paper on the ground. The indignant prince was with difficulty restrained from drawing his sword; and a few days after this quarrel Valentinian was found strangled in his apart-

A. D. 391.

ment. The crime of Arbogastes was represented to the world, as the voluntary effect of the young emperor's despair: his body was conducted to Milan; his funeral oration was pronounced by Ambrose; and the rhetorician Eugenius, who had attained the rank of master of the offices, was elevated, by the artful and judicious Arbogastes, to the imperial throne.

Although Theodosius received with indignation the intelligence of the death of Valentinian, and the perfidy of Arbogastes, he dismissed the ambassadors of Eugenius with splendid presents and an ambiguous answer. Two years were consumed in the preparations for civil war. The pious monarch was anxious to discover the will of heaven; and the hermit John, who inhabited an humble

ble cell near the city Lycopolis, delivered the assurance of a bloody and infallible victory. The prediction was supported by the industry of the master-generals Stilicho and Thomafius, and the different bands of barbarians, the Iberians, the Arabs, and the Goths; among the latter of these the renowned Alaric, first acquired the knowledge of the art of war in the school of Theodosius.

Arbogastes, who in the name of Eugenius ruled the western empire, attempted not to defend the extent of a wide and vulnerable frontier; he fixed his station on the confines of Italy, and abandoned even the Passes of the Alps to the bold invader. Theodosius beheld with astonishment the camp of the Gauls and Germans, which occupied the country extending to Aquileia and the banks of the river Frigidus. The emperor of the east, undismayed by numerous obstacles, attacked the camp of his rivals, and placed in the front of the assault his barbarian allies, with perhaps the patriotic wish that the day might prove fatal even to the conquerors; but though ten thousand of these auxiliaries, with Bacurius, the general of the Iberians, perished on the field, the forces of the usurper maintained their superiority. Theodosius under the shelter of night retired, repulsed and disconsolate, to the adjacent hills; and the vigilant Arbogastes

gastes detached a considerable body of troops to encompass the eastern army. The dawn of day revealed to Theodosius his danger, and at the same instant dispelled his apprehensions. A friendly message from the leaders of those troops, expressed their inclination to desert the cause of the tyrant. With this fresh reinforcement, Theodosius marched to surprise the camp of his adversary; and a violent tempest which suddenly arose from the east, and impelled the dust in the faces of the enemy, seconded the efforts of the pious emperor. The superstition of the Gauls magnified the terrors of the storm, and they yielded without shame to the invisible powers of heaven. The head of the rhetorician Eugenius was separated from his body, as he prostrated himself at the feet of Theodosius; and Arbogastes, who after the battle had wandered several days among the mountains, by a voluntary death escaped the mortifying insult of a victorious rival.

A. D. 394.
Sept. 6.

After the defeat of Eugenius, the Roman world acknowledged the authority of Theodosius; but the increasing symptoms of a dropsey announced the speedy dissolution of the emperor. His two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, had already obtained from their father the title of Augustus. To the former was allotted the throne of Constantinople, and

and to the latter the sceptre of the west; he arrived but just in time to receive it from the hands

A. D. 395. of Theodosius, who expired in the palace of Milan in the fiftieth year of his age, and in the sixteenth of a reign invariably prosperous.

Two memorable occurrences during the reign of Theodosius demand our attention. 1. The progressive effeminacy of the Romans induced the foldiers, under the administration of that prince, to lay aside the defensive armour which they had invariably worn from the first foundation of the city; and by exposing their naked bodies to the weapons of the barbarians, they ensured defeat, and precipitated the fall of the empire. 2. The ruin of Paganism, which perhaps is the only example of the total extirpation of any ancient and popular superstition. After the victory of Theodosius over Maximus, the Roman senate, influenced by the wishes of the conqueror, had condemned by a large majority the ancient rites, and degraded the majesty of Jupiter. The edicts of the emperor prohibited the use of sacrifice, confiscated the consecrated property, and extinguished the hopes of his Pagan subjects by the final demolition of the temples, many of which were the most splendid and beautiful monuments of Grecian architecture. Severe penalties proscribed the worship

worship of any inanimate idol, by the sacrifice of a guiltless victim : the total abolition of the ancient public worship confirmed the religious revolution ; and twenty-eight years after the death of Theodosius, the vestiges of paganism were no longer visible to the eye of the legislator.

CHAPTER XX.

DIVISION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE BETWEEN THE SONS
OF THEODOSIUS—REIGN OF ARCADIUS AND HONO-
RIUS—ADMINISTRATION OF RUFINUS AND STI-
LICH—REVOLT AND DEFEAT OF GILDO IN
'AFRICA—REVOLT OF THE GOTH—TWO
INVASIONS OF ITALY BY ALARIC AND
RADAGAIUS—THEY ARE REPULS-
ED BY STILICH—THE GERMANS
OVER-RUN GAUL—USURPATI-
ON OF CONSTANTINE IN THE
WEST—DISGRACE AND
DEATH OF STILICH.

THE prosperity of the Roman empire expired with the life of Theodosius; but the memory of his virtues still continued to protect the inexperienced youth of his sons, who were acknowledged by the unanimous consent of mankind as the emperors of the east and west. Arcadius, who was then about eighteen years of age, had been educated in Constantinople, and from thence reigned over the provinces of Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and

and Egypt, from the Lower Danube to the confines of Persia and Æthiopia. His younger brother Honorius, in the eleventh year of his age, inherited Italy, Africa, Gaul, Spain, and Britain. The provinces of Noricum, Pannonia, and Dalmatia, belonged to the western empire; but the dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia were assigned to the sovereign of the east: and in this final division of the Roman world, the respective advantages of territory, riches, and military strength were fairly balanced. The subjects of Rome revered the names of their sovereigns, and execrated alone the ministers who abused the authority of the throne.

The elevation of Rufinus, whose character is stained by the imputation of every crime, tarnished the glory of Theodosius. From an obscure corner of Gaul, this minion of fortune was raised to the station of master of the offices; his diligence and capacity secured the confidence of his sovereign, who long remained ignorant of the pride, the malice, and the covetousness of his disposition. Promotus, the master-general of the infantry, who had protected the empire from the invasion of the Ostrogoths, regarded with indignation the pre-eminence of a rival, whose profession he despised. In public council the impatient soldier chastised the indecent insolence of the favourite

avourite with a blow: this act of violence was punished by the disgrace and exile of Promotus, who was ordered to repair to a military station on the banks of the Danube; where, though he was slain in a skirmish with the barbarians, his death was universally ascribed to the artifices of Rufinus. But the power of the favourite was precarious, as long as Tatian and his son Proculus possessed the important offices of præfect of the east, and of præfect of Constantinople: they were accused of rapine and corruption; and in the special commission constituted by the emperor, Rufinus was appointed president, with the sole right of pronouncing judgment. The father was thrown into a dungeon; the son consulted his safety by flight: but the unhappy Proculus was recalled, by assurances of friendship from the president, and by a letter from the credulous Tatian. He was instantly seized, condemned, and beheaded in the suburbs of Constantinople; and the miserable father, after being compelled to behold the execution of his son, was permitted to consume the remnant of his life in poverty and exile.

The absence, and soon afterwards the death, of Theodosius, established the authority of Rufinus, who had succeeded to the præfecture of the east, over the person and dominions of Arcadius. He engrossed the public wealth by every art of partial
and

and general extortion ; but he neglected to conciliate the hearts of the soldiers and people by a prudent distribution of his ill-gotten riches, and his extreme parsimony exposed him to the effects of reproach and envy. Lucian, the son of the præfect Florentius, who in the reign of Constantius opposed Julian and oppressed Gaul, had employed a part of his inheritance to purchase from Rufinus the office of count of the east. But his virtuous administration disgraced the maxims of his patron ; he had refused to commit an act of injustice which would have tended to the profit of the emperor's uncle : Arcadius was persuaded to delegate the punishment of disobedience to the active malice of the præfect of the east ; with incessant speed Rufinus performed a journey of eight hundred miles from Constantinople to Antioch ; and the count of the east was dragged before his tribunal. Though Lucian was not even impeached by the voice of an accuser, yet he was condemned by his inexorable persecutor to be chastised on the neck with leather thongs, armed with lead ; and when he fainted under the violence of the pain, was removed into a close litter, to conceal his dying agonies from the eyes of the indignant city. Rufinus, after perpetrating this inhuman act, returned with similar rapidity to Constantinople, in hopes of immediately accomplishing the nuptials of his

daughter, whom he intended to bestow in marriage on his royal pupil the emperor of the east.

But while the præfect satiated his revenge at Antioch, a conspiracy of the eunuchs, directed by Eutropius, the great chamberlain, undermined his influence in the palace. Arcadius was not inclined to love the daughter of Rufinus, and the youthful prince eagerly listened to the description, and gazed with ardour on the picture, of Eudoxia, the daughter of Bauto, a general of the Franks in the service of Rome, and who was educated, since the death of her father, in the family of the sons of Promotus. The emperor concealed with care his amorous designs from the knowledge of his minister, who announced to the people of Constantinople the fortune of his daughter, and the

A. D. 395. approaching ceremony of the royal
April 27. nuptials: but the solemn procession stopped when it reached the house of the sons of Promotus; the principal eunuch entered the mansion, invested Eudoxia with the imperial robes, and conducted her to the palace and the bed of Arcadius. The secrecy and success of this conspiracy fixed an indelible ridicule on the character of the minister, who beheld with indignation and fear, in the place of his daughter, a foreign maid, educated in the house of his implacable enemies, raised to the august rank of empress of the east. His treasures still afforded the effectual means
of

of defending his dignity, and perhaps oppressing his adversaries ; but while he opposed with equal arms the artful measures of the eunuch Eutropius, he was astonished by the approach of a more formidable rival, of Stilicho the master-general of the empire of the west.

The father of Stilicho was an officer of barbarian cavalry, and his situation countenances the assertion that the hero who so long supported the declining empire of Rome sprung from the savage race of the Vandals. The strength and stature of Stilicho admirably fitted him for the profession of arms, and his prudence and valour distinguished him in every degree of military promotion ; the judgment of Theodosius had selected him to ratify a solemn treaty with the monarch of Persia, and the merit of the ambassador was rewarded on his return with the hand of the beautiful and accomplished Serena, the niece of Theodosius and the daughter of his brother Honorius. The assurance that the husband of Serena would be faithful to the throne, engaged the emperor to exalt the fortunes of Stilicho, who revenged the death of Promotus, his rival and his friend, by the slaughter of many thousands of the Bastarnæ. The virtues of Stilicho had incurred the hatred of Rufinus, but the general was protected from domestic foes by the influence of Serena. In the civil war he accompanied, and shared the glory of Theodosius ; and

the dying monarch, with his last breath, recommended to Stilicho, the care of his sons and of the republic. The master-general claimed the guardianship of the two empires, during the minority of Arcadius and Honorius. In the depth of winter he passed the Alps, reviewed the state of the garrisons, repressed the enterprises of the Germans, and returned with incredible speed to Milan. The person and court of Honorius readily acknowledged the ascendant of Stilicho, and his authority was disputed alone by the independence of Gildo the Moor, in Africa, and the minister of Constantinople, who asserted his equal reign over the empire of the east.

The timid soul of Rufinus was alarmed, when Stilicho prepared to lead back into the east, the troops of that empire which had been employed in the civil war against Eugenius. At Thessalonica, an imperial message from the Byzantine court declared that the nearer approach of the husband of Serena would be considered as an act of hostility. The prompt obedience of the general of the west professed his loyalty; but Stilicho devolved his revenge on Gainas, the Goth, on whose fidelity he relied, and to whose command he left the troops of the east. As soon as these had resolved the death of the ambitious præfect, they condescended to flatter his pride; and the important

tant secret was preserved by thousands during the long march from Theſſalonica to the gates of Conſtantinople. They halted in the fields of Mars, about a mile from the capital of the eaſt; and the emperor, with his miniſter, advanced according to cuſtom to ſalute the army, which Rufinus was tempted to believe would place the diadem on his head. As he paſſed along the ranks with ſtudied courteſy, the wings inſenſibly wheeled from the right and left, and incloſed the devoted A. D. 395. victim. The ſignal of death was given Nov. 27th. by Gainas, and a daring ſoldier plunged his ſword in the breaſt of the guilty Rufinus, who expired at the feet of the affrighted emperor. His mangled body was abandoned to the brutal fury of the populace, but his wife and daughter were protected by a religious ſanctuary, and were permitted afterwards to ſpend their lives in the peaceful retirement of Jeruſalem. /

But though Stilicho gratified his revenge by the murder of his rival, his ambition was diſappointed; the emperor Arcadius preferred the obſequious arts of the eunuch Eutropius to the ſtern genius of a foreign warrior. The charms of Eudoxia, and the ſword of Gainas, who betraying the cauſe of his benefactor accepted the ſtation of maſter-general of the eaſt, till they were divided by jealousy, ſupported the authority of Eutropius;

and Stilicho beheld the same troops which had assassinated his rival, engaged to assert the independence of the throne of Constantinople. The senate of that capital declared the husband of Serena an enemy of the republic, and confiscated his possessions throughout the provinces of the east; and at a moment when union was most necessary, the subjects of Arcadius and Honorius were instructed by their respective masters to view each other in a hostile light. The distinction of two governments, which soon produced the separation of two nations, will justify the design of suspending the Byzantine history, to prosecute the disgraceful, but memorable, reign of Honorius.

The prudent Stilicho, instead of persisting to force the inclinations of Arcadius, abandoned him to his unworthy favourites, and prepared to assert the majesty of the western empire by the punishment of Gildo the Moor. This usurper was the brother of the late tyrant Firmus, and had been rewarded for his apparent fidelity with the dignity of a military count, and the immense patrimony of his brother. By Theodosius he was invested with the command of Africa; and during twelve years that the unhappy provinces groaned under his authority, he had gradually usurped the administration of justice and of the finances, without account, and without controul. In the civil war
between

between Theodosius and Eugenius, the count of Africa maintained a suspicious neutrality : but the designs of Stilicho engaged the rebel to address his homage to the feeble Arcadius ; and the hope of adding the numerous cities of Africa to the empire of the east induced the ministers of Constantinople to urge their ineffectual claim.

When Stilicho had given a decisive answer to the pretensions of the Byzantine court, he summoned the tyrant of Africa before the tribunal of the Roman senate. The unanimous suffrage of that assembly declared him an enemy of the republic ; but as the subsistence of Rome depended upon the harvests of Africa, the præfect Symmachus admonished the minister of his apprehensions that the Moor, by prohibiting the exportation of corn, might interrupt the tranquillity of the capital. The prudence of Stilicho, by collecting a large supply of grain from the provinces of Gaul, maintained in plenty the inhabitants of Rome during the whole term of the African war.

The usurper of Africa had pursued, with implacable rage, the life of his younger brother Mascezel, who oppressed by superior power took refuge in the court of Milan, where he soon received the intelligence that his two innocent children had been murdered by their inhuman uncle. The vigilant Stilicho entrusted the impatient

Mascezel with the opportunity of revenge, and the first attempt in this arduous enterprize. A chosen body of Gallic troops from the JOVIAN, the HERCULIAN, and the AUGUSTAN legions, in number about five thousand, embarked from the port of Pisa, and landed after a successful voyage on the coast of Africa.

The tyrant of that province had collected an army of seventy thousand men, and boasted that his numerous cavalry would trample under foot the troops of his adversary. But Mascezel was too well acquainted with the manners of his countrymen to dread their naked and disorderly host. He

A. D. 393. fixed his camp of five thousand veterans in the face of the numerous enemy, and after a delay of three days gave the signal for engagement. As he advanced himself in front with offers of pardon, he encountered the foremost standard bearer of the Africans; and on his refusal to yield, struck him on the arm with his sword. The arm and standard sunk under the blow; the imaginary act of submission was repeated by all the standards of the line, and Mascezel obtained almost a bloodless victory. Gildo, who had escaped from the field of battle to the sea-shore, endeavoured in a small vessel to reach some harbour of the eastern empire, but was driven back by the winds into Tabraca, a port between the
two

two Hippos. The inhabitants seized and confined the tyrant, who, by a voluntary death, avoided the tortures he had reason to expect from his incensed and victorious brother. The punishment of the guilty province was referred by the apparent moderation of Stilicho to the senate and people of Rome; and the number of the accomplices of Gildo was multiplied by the interest of the imperial ministers. But the victor did not long survive to enjoy his triumph; the court of Milan had received him at his return with affected applause, but secret jealousy; as Mascezel was passing over a bridge, in company with Stilicho, he was thrown from his horse into the river; the humane haste of the attendants was repressed by a malicious smile from the master-general of the west, and the unfortunate son of Nabal perished in the stream.

The joy of the court of Milan for the recovery of Africa, was succeeded by the marriage of Honorius with his cousin Maria, the daughter of Stilicho; but as Honorius was only in his
fourteenth year, the persuasions of Sere-
na deferred the consummation of the royal nuptials; and either from the coldness or debility of the emperor, Maria died a virgin, after she had been ten years a wife. The subjects who studied the character of their sovereign, discovered that Honorius was
without

A. D. 398.

without talents or passions; the son of Theodosius, engaged in the occupation of feeding his poultry, was content to slumber through life; and during an eventful reign of twenty-eight years, it is scarce necessary to mention the name of the emperor Honorius. But the valour and abilities of the master-general, compensated a long time for the incapacity and indolence of the monarch, and repelled the invasion of the barbarians, who appeared in arms in less than a twelvemonth from the death of Theodosius.

The Goths, invited probably by the treachery of Rufinus, had spread their devastations from the woody shores of Dalmatia to the walls of Constantinople, and their measures were directed by the bold and artful genius of the renowned Alaric. That celebrated leader, descended from the royal race of the Balti, had solicited the command of the Roman armies, and the imperial court compelled him to demonstrate the folly of their refusal. The fortifications of Constantinople secured indeed the person of the emperor, and might defy the impotent valour of the barbarians: but Alaric disdained to trample any longer on the prostrate countries of Thrace and Dacia; he traversed the plains of Macedonia and Thessaly; pressed without resistance through the Pass of Thermopylæ, rendered immortal by the devoted lives of Leonidas and his

his Spartans; and deluged the fields of Phocis and Bæotia with his innumerable host of barbarians. Thebes was preserved by the haste of Alaric to occupy the city of Athens: The Athenians were readily persuaded, with a part of their wealth, to ransom their buildings and inhabitants. The treaty was observed with mutual fidelity; the Gothic chief was admitted within the walls, accepted a banquet provided by the magistrate, and affected to shew he was not ignorant of the manners of civilised nations: but the whole territory of Attica was blasted by his baleful presence. The distance from Megara to Corinth is but thirty miles; the Goths penetrated through the gloomy woods of Citheron, and overspread the extent of the Peloponnesus. Corinth, Sparta, and Argos tamely submitted to their arms; and the most fortunate of the inhabitants were saved by death from beholding the slavery of their families and the conflagration of their cities.

The last hope of the people was placed in the general of the west; and Stilicho advanced to chastise the invaders of Greece. A numerous fleet was equipped in the ports of Italy; and the troops, after navigating the Ionian sea, disembarked near the ruins of Corinth. The mountainous country of Arcadia was the theatre of a long and doubtful contest

A. D. 397.

between

between the two generals; but the skill of the Roman prevailed. The Goths were gradually compelled to retreat to the lofty mountain of Pholoe; the camp of the barbarians was besieged; the stream of the river was diverted into another channel; and while the troops of Alaric laboured under the incessant pressure of hunger and thirst, a strong line of circumvallation was drawn, to prevent their escape. Stilicho, confident of victory, had retired to enjoy the theatrical games of the Greeks, when he was astonished with the intelligence that the Goths were already in full possession of the important province of Epirus. Alaric had watched the opportunity, when his enemies, deserting their standards, had spread themselves over the adjacent country. He pierced the intrenchments which surrounded his camp, performed a dangerous march of thirty miles as far as the gulf of Corinth, and transported his troops, his captives, and his spoil, over an arm of the sea at least half a mile in breadth. This delay allowed Alaric sufficient time to conclude a treaty with the ministers of Constantinople; and Stilicho retiring from the dominions of Arcadius, respected, in the honourable character of the servant of the emperor of the east, the fatal enemy of Rome.

The treaty of Alaric promoted him to the rank of master-general of Illyricum; and the Gothic conqueror

conqueror was received as a lawful magistrate in the cities he had so lately besieged. His first orders were to provide his troops with offensive and defensive arms from the magazines of Margus, Ratiaria, Naissus, and Thessalonica; and the unhappy provincials were compelled to forge the instruments of their own destruction. The exploits of Alaric had secured the confidence and attachment of his followers; and the master-general of Illyricum, with the consent of the barbarian chiefs, was solemnly proclaimed king of the Visigoths. Seated on the verge of both empires, he was tempted by the wealth and beauty of Italy to aspire to the conquest of Rome, and to enrich his army with the accumulated spoils of the ancient mistress of the world.

The first invasion of Italy by the arms of Alaric, is obscured by the scarcity of facts and the uncertainty of dates; unless his operations were slow and cautious, the interval of time suggests a suspicion, that the Gothic king, retiring towards the banks of the Danube, reinforced his army with fresh swarms of hostile barbarians, before he penetrated into the heart of Italy. The impending danger was concealed by the arts of flattery from Honorius, till Alaric approached the palace of Milan; and the emperor was deterred from the disgraceful measure of securing his person in the provinces

provinces of Gaul, by the courage and authority of Stilicho alone, who promised, if the court of Milan would maintain their ground during his absence, he would soon return with an army equal to the encounter of the Gothic king. The general of the west hastily ascended the Alps in the midst of winter, and summoned to the defence of Italy the most remote troops of the west; the fortresses of the Rhine were abandoned; even the legion which had been stationed to guard the wall of Britain was hastily recalled; and a numerous body of the cavalry of the Alani was persuaded to engage in the service of the emperor, who anxiously expected the return of his general.

During the absence of Stilicho, the Goths had advanced without resistance, and without impediment, towards Milan; and as Alaric approached the suburbs of that city, he enjoyed the proud satisfaction of seeing the emperor of the Romans fly before him. Honorius, who endeavoured to secure his person in the city of Arles, had scarce passed the Po before he was overtaken by a detachment of Gothic cavalry, and was compelled to seek shelter within the fortification of Afta, a town of Liguria, situate on the banks of the Tanarus. The siege was instantly formed, and incessantly pressed by the king of the Goths, who had already proposed the indignity of a capitulation,

tion, when the fears of Honorius were dispelled by the presence of the hero whom he had so long expected. At the head of a select vanguard Stilicho swam the Addua, passed the Po, and cut his way in a successful action through the Gothic camp, under the walls of Asta. The barbarians were gradually invested by the troops of the west, which issued from the passes of the Alps: A council of the long-haired chiefs of the Gothic nation recommended a seasonable retreat; but the intrepid Alaric declared, he was resolved to find in Italy either a kingdom or a grave.

The camp of the Goths, which Alaric had pitched in the neighbourhood of Pollentia, was surprised by the vigilance of Stilicho, while the christian Goths were devoutly employed in celebrating the festival of Easter. The
A. D. 403.
March 29.
undaunted genius of their leader gave them in a few moments an order, and a field of battle. The death of the chief of the Alani, whose valour approved his suspected loyalty, was followed by the flight of the squadrons he commanded; and the defeat of the wing of cavalry might have determined the victory of Alaric, if Stilicho had not led to the charge the Roman and barbarian infantry. The skill of the general and the valour of the soldiers surmounted every obstacle; the camp of the Goths was forced, and the
the

the scene of rapine and slaughter made some amends for the calamities which they had inflicted on the subjects of the empire ; several thousands of captives, among whom was the wife of Alaric, were compelled to implore the clemency of the insulting foe ; and the triumph of Stilicho over the Goths was compared to that of Marius over the Cimbri.

Alaric, after the total defeat of his infantry, escaped from the field of battle with the greatest part of his cavalry entire and unbroken. Rushing through the passes of the Apennine, he spread desolation over the face of Tuscany, and pressed towards the gates of Rome. The capital was saved by the diligence of Stilicho, but he respected the despair of his enemy and proposed to purchase the absence of the barbarians. The spirit of Alaric would have rejected a treaty, but the king submitted to the voice of his people, and, after ratifying the conditions of peace, he repassed the Po with the remains of the flourishing army which he had led into Italy ; a considerable part of the Roman forces still continued to attend his motions, and Stilicho, by a secret correspondence with some of the barbarian chiefs, was apprised of the designs of Alaric. The Gothic king had resolved in his retreat to occupy the city of Verona, which commands the principal passage of the Rhætian Alps ;
and

and after marching through the territories of the German tribes, to invade the provinces of Gaul on the side of the Rhine. Ignorant that his intentions were betrayed, he advanced towards the passes of the mountains, already possessed by the imperial troops; when he found himself attacked on every side, and the loss of the Goths near Verona equalled that they sustained in the defeat of Pol-lentia: Alaric was saved by the swiftness of his horse, and the rashness of the Alani, whose impatience disappointed the well-concerted measures of the Roman general. The Gothic king secured the remains of his army among the adjacent rocks, and prepared to maintain a siege against a superior enemy; but the moderation of Stilicho permitted him to retire, and the retreat of the barbarians was considered as the deliverance of Italy.

As soon as the provinces were delivered from the invasion of Alaric, Honorius celebrated in the imperial city the auspicious æra of the Gothic victory, and of his sixth consulship. On this occasion the inhuman combats of gladiators polluted, for the last time, the amphitheatre of Rome; and the laws of Honorius exterminated a custom which had so long resisted the voice of humanity and religion. But amidst triumphant acclamations, the emperor of the west was not insensible to his recent danger, and the defenceless situation of the palace of Milan; he fixed on Ravenna, as a for-

treſs where he might ſecurely remain while the country was covered by the hoſts of barbarians.

Ravenna, on the coaſt of the Hadriatic, about ten miles from the moſt ſouthern of the mouths of the Po, had early attracted the notice of Auguſtus, who prepared, about three miles from the old town, a capacious harbour for the reception of two hundred and fifty ſhips of war. Lofty walls and profound ditches ſurrounded the city; and through the miſt of it, a deep and broad canal poured the waters of the Po. The adjacent country for many miles was an impaſſable morafs; and the cauſeway which connected Ravenna with the continent, might be eaſily guarded or deſtroyed on the approach of an hoſtile army. The air was pure, and the regular tides of the Hadriatic, which ſwept the canals, floated every day the veſſels of the adjacent country into the heart of Ravenna. This

A. D. 404.

advantageous ſituation was fortified by art and labour; and the emperor Honorius, anxious for his perſonal ſafety, retired in the twentieth year of his age to this place of refuge. His example was followed by his feeble ſucceſſors; and till the middle of the eighth century, Ravenna was conſidered as the ſeat of government, and the capital of Italy.

The fears of Honorius were not without foundation. The Huns, preſſed by the arms of the victorious barbarians of the more northern regions,

ons, were impelled against the Suevi, the Vandals, the Burgundians; and these, abandoning their woods to the fugitives of Sarmatia, marched under the command of Radagaisus almost to the gates of Rome. The Alani added their active cavalry to the heavy infantry of the Germans, and the Gothic adventurers crowded eagerly to the standard of Radagaisus. An army of two hundred thousand fighting men might be increased by the women, children and slaves to the amount of four hundred thousand persons; and this multitude poured like a deluge along the banks of the

A. D. 406.

Upper Danube. The safety of Rome was entrusted to the sword of Stilicho, who once more recalled the troops from the provinces, and by alluring deserters, and enfranchising slaves, collected with difficulty from the subjects of a great empire, an army of thirty or forty thousand men; these were reinforced by a large body of barbarians, animated by interest or resentment to oppose the ambition of Radagaisus. The king of the confederate Germans had already formed the siege of Florence; the city was reduced to the last extremity, and the fainting courage of the citizens was supported only by the authority of St. Ambrose, who promised them a speedy deliverance. On a sudden they beheld from the walls the banners of Stilicho, who advanced with his united force to the relief of the city, and soon marked that spot

for the grave of the barbarian host. The enemy was surrounded by strong lines of circumvallation, and the imprisoned multitude of horses and men were gradually destroyed by famine, rather than by the sword. The monarch of so many warlike nations, after the loss of his bravest warriors, was forced to confide in the mercy of Stilicho; the death of the royal captive, who was ignominiously beheaded, disgraced the triumph of Rome; the remains of the famished Germans were sold as slaves, and Stilicho deserved a second time the glorious title of the deliverer of Italy.

With Radagaisus perished more than one-third of the various multitude of Sueves and Vandals, of Alani and Burgundians, who adhered to the standard of their general. After his defeat, two parts of the German host, which must have exceeded the number of one hundred thousand men, still remained in arms. Stilicho, who considered the safety of Rome and Italy as the great object of his care, facilitated their retreat; and the invasion of Gaul, which had been planned by Alaric, was executed by the remains of the army of Radagaisus. Yet in the march of the Germans along the Rhine the Alemanni preserved a state of inactive neutrality; and the Franks, who were attached to the administration of Stilicho, distinguished their zeal in the defence of the empire: they encountered the Vandals, who had separated themselves from
from

from the standard of their allies, with courage and success; and the whole Vandal people must have been extirpated, if the squadrons of the Alani had not advanced to their relief, and trampled down the infantry of the Franks, which was compelled to retire from the unequal contest.

The victorious confederates pursued their march; and on the last day of the year, A. D. 406. when the Rhine was probably frozen, passed over into the defenceless provinces of Gaul. This passage of the barbarians, who never afterwards retreated, may be considered as the Fall of the Roman Empire in the countries beyond the Alps. The provinces, late the scene of peace and plenty, were in a moment desolated: The cities of Mentz, Worms, Strasburgh, Spire, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruelty and rapacity of the Germans; and in less than two years the troops of the savages of the Baltic advanced, without a combat, to the foot of the Pyrenæan mountains.

The walls and stations of the province of Britain had been stripped of A. D. 407. the Roman troops for the Gothic war: The caprice and spirit of revolt in the soldiers had successively elevated and destroyed in Marcus and Gratian two transient emperors and unfortunate victims to their violence: Their impetuous levity seated on the throne a common soldier of the name of Con-

stantine. The danger of leaving his inactive troops in those camps which had been twice polluted by sedition and blood, induced the new emperor to attempt the reduction of the western provinces. He landed at Boulogne with an inconsiderable force, was readily acknowledged by the cities of Gaul, and after some successes against the detached parties of the Germans, negociated a treaty with, and persuaded by his liberality, several tribes of the barbarians to undertake the defence of the Rhine. But when Constantine advanced into the provinces of the south, he was encountered and defeated by the imperial forces, commanded by Sarus the Goth. The vanquished emperor retired within the walls of Vienna; and the victorious army, after an ineffectual siege, was obliged, in a precipitate retreat, to purchase a free passage from the outlaws of the Alps; those natural barriers, strengthened by art, separated the dominions of Honorius and Constantine. The submission of Spain established the throne of the latter; and the opposition which was made to his authority in that country proceeded not so much from the spirit of the people, as from the zeal of the family of Theodosius. Four brothers had obtained by the favour of their kinsman, the deceased emperor, ample possessions in Lusitania; these armed at their own expence a considerable body of slaves and dependents, and occupied the strong

strong passes of the mountains. The sovereign of Gaul and Britain was perplexed by this insurrection; and such was the weakness of the empire, that he was compelled to negotiate with the barbarians. Nine bands, composed of the Scots, the Moors, and Marcomanni, on whom was bestowed the title of Honorians, and consisting only of five thousand men, terminated this civil war, which had threatened the power and safety of Constantine.

Though Alaric must have suffered considerable loss in his retreat from the confines of Italy, yet adversity had exercised and displayed the genius of the Gothic monarch; the fame of his valour had invited to his standard the bravest of the barbarian warriors; and Stilicho condescended to negotiate a treaty with Alaric, who, renouncing the service of the emperor of the east, was declared by the court of Ravenna master-general of the præfecture of Illyricum, as it was claimed, according to the ancient limits, by the minister of Honorius. The irruption of Radagaisus, during which Alaric maintained a suspicious neutrality, suspended the ambitious design implied in the articles of the treaty. After the defeat of the Vandals, Stilicho resumed his pretensions to the provinces of the east, and declared his impatience to lead the united armies of the Goths and Romans to the walls of Constantinople. It is probable the
policy

of the master-general of the west extended no further, than to employ at a distance from Italy the forces of Alaric; but this design could not elude the penetration of the Gothic monarch, who after some languid operations in Thessaly and Epirus, transmitted from his camp near Æmona to the emperor of the west a long account of promises, of expences, and of demands. Though he called for immediate satisfaction, yet he professed himself the friend of Stilicho, and the soldier of Honorius; he offered his person and troops to march against the usurper of Gaul, and solicited some vacant province of the western empire, as a permanent retreat for the Gothic nation.

The necessity of finding some artificial support for a weak government, had insensibly revived the authority of the Roman senate. The minister of Honorius proposed to that assembly the demands of Alaric, and submitted to their consideration the choice of peace and war. Though the senators at first declared by tumultuary exclamations that it was disgraceful to purchase a precarious truce from a barbarian king, yet the authority of Stilicho extorted, at length, a reluctant assent. Four thousand pounds of gold were granted, under the name of a subsidy, to conciliate the friendship of the Gothic king; Lampadius alone persisted in his dissent, and exclaimed, "This is not a
" treaty

“ treaty of peace, but of servitude ;” he escaped the danger of his opposition by retiring to the sanctuary of a christian church.

But the reign of Stilicho now drew near its end, and the minister might perceive the symptoms of approaching disgrace. His partiality for the barbarians exasperated the soldiers who still assumed the name of Roman legions ; the people imputed to the mistaken policy of the minister, the misfortunes which were the natural consequences of their own degeneracy ; the mind of the emperor was alienated from the master-general ; and the ungrateful Olympius, who had been promoted by Stilicho to the most honourable offices of the palace, revealed to Honorius that he was without weight or authority in his own government ; he insinuated that Stilicho might place the diadem on the head of his son Eucherius ; the emperor was instigated by his new favourite to assume the tone of independent dignity ; he declared his pleasure to return from Rome to the inaccessible fortrefs of Ravenna. On the intelligence of the death of his brother Arcadius, he proposed to visit Constantinople, and regulate, as a guardian, the provinces of the infant Theodosius. Though he was diverted from this wild design, he remained fixed in his resolution to visit the camp at Pavia, composed of Roman troops, the enemies of Stilicho, and his barbarian auxiliaries.

In

In the passage of the emperor through Bologna a mutiny of the guards was excited and appeased by the policy of Stilicho; and Honorius proceeding to the camp at Pavia embraced his minister, whom he now considered as a tyrant, for the last time. The emperor was received by the troops assembled for the Gallic war with loud acclamations; on the fourth day, after he had pronounced a studied military oration, the friends of Stilicho, the most illustrious officers of the empire, were massacred by the soldiers, whom the arts of Olympius had prepared for the bloody conspiracy. When the intelligence of this fatal tumult reached the camp at Bologna, the mind of Stilicho was filled with just apprehensions; he summoned a council of the confederate leaders, and the impetuous voice of the assembly called aloud for arms, and for revenge: But Stilicho viewed with horror the fatal consequences of arming a crowd of barbarians against the soldiers of Rome and Italy. The confederates, impatient of delay, retired with fear and indignation. At the hour of midnight, Sarus, a Gothic warrior renowned for his strength, invaded the camp of his benefactor, and penetrated to the tent of the general, who, sleepless and meditating on his dangerous situation, escaped with difficulty from the sword of the Goth. After admonishing the cities of Italy to shut their gates against

against the barbarians, he threw himself into Ravenna, then in the absolute possession of his enemies. The artifices of Olympius drew the suppliant from the christian altar he had embraced; and count Heraclian, as soon as the minister had passed the holy threshold, produced the warrant for execution. Stilicho, after repressing the ineffectual zeal of his followers, who would have attempted a rescue, submitted his neck to the sword with manly resignation. His friends and relations were involved in his fate; the flight of his son Eucherius was intercepted, and the unhappy youth was soon after slain; his daughter Thermantia, who had succeeded her sister Maria in the imperial bed, and who like Maria still remained a virgin, was immediately divorced. Among his dependents, Claudian, whose genius ranked him with the poets of ancient Rome, and whose lines have immortalised the martial deeds of Stilicho and the consequent ingratitude of Honorius, concealed himself during the tumult of the revolution; and in a suppliant epistle, consulting the dictates of prudence rather than of honour, propitiated his enemies, and escaped the danger which menaced him.

CHAPTER XXI.

INVASION OF ITALY BY ALARIC—MANNERS OF THE
ROMAN PEOPLE—ROME THRICE BESIEGED, AND AT
LENGTH PILLAGED BY THE GOTHs—DEATH
OF ALARIC—THE GOTHs EVACUATE ITALY
—FALL OF CONSTANTINE—GAUL AND
SPAIN OCCUPIED BY BARBARIANS—
INDEPENDENCE OF BRITAIN,

ALTHOUGH the foreign auxiliaries, who had been attached to the person of Stilicho, lamented his death, yet the desire of revenge was checked by an apprehension for their wives and children, who were detained as hostages in the strong cities of Italy. The absurd cruelty of the ministers of Honorius involved in one promiscuous slaughter, which was executed at a certain signal throughout Italy, these pledges for the fidelity of the martial barbarians. The republic lost the assistance, and deserved the enmity of thirty thousand of her bravest soldiers; the injured barbarians
cast

cast a look of hope and indignation towards the camp of Alaric, and swore to avenge, by implacable hostility, the base violation of the laws of hospitality.

Alaric, from his camp on the confines of Italy, attentively watched the revolutions of the palace. The imperial ministers had delayed the payment of the four thousand pounds of gold granted by the Roman senate; the king of the Goths demanded a fair and reasonable satisfaction, and his moderate language was considered as an evidence of his weakness. While the ministers of Ravenna maintained a fullen silence, Alaric by bold and rapid marches passed the Alps and the Po, pillaged the cities of Aquileia and Cremona, increased his army by the accession of the discontented auxiliaries, and advanced to the edge of the morass which protected the residence of the emperor of the west. Instead of attempting the hopeless siege of Ravenna, the Goths proceeded to Rimini, and pursuing the course of the Flaminian way, descended into the rich plains of Umbria; thence advancing with unabated vigour, they pitched their camp under the lofty walls of Rome.

During the period of six hundred and nineteen years, the seat of empire had never been violated by the presence of a foreign enemy. The inhabitants of the ancient capital, when besieged by
Alaric,

Alaric, might amount to twelve hundred thousand persons ; but the nobles were sunk in luxury and effeminacy, and the populace, vile and wretched, had been continually recruited by the manumission of slaves, or the influx of strangers. The riches of the former and the indolence of the latter, promised a wealthy and ready conquest to the bold invader; and the Gothic king, encompassing the

A. D. 408. walls with his host, guarded the navigation of the Tyber, and intercepted

the provisions from the adjacent country. The Romans, instead of meeting the enemy in arms, directed their rage against Serena, the widow of Stilicho, whom they accused of a treasonable correspondence with the invader, and, without evidence, condemned to death ; but this act of injustice could not alleviate the distress of the inhabitants, who were soon doomed to experience all the calamities of famine. Food the most repugnant to sense or imagination was eagerly purchased at an incredible price ; and a dark suspicion was entertained, that some desperate wretches fed on the bodies of their fellow creatures whom they had secretly murdered.

The last resource of the Romans was in the moderation of Alaric ; the senate in this emergency presumed to negotiate with the enemy. The important commission was delegated to Basilius, a senator

a senator of Spanish extraction, and to John the first tribune of the notaries, whose former intimacy with the Gothic king peculiarly qualified him for the office. The ambassadors at first assumed a lofty language, and declared, if an honourable capitulation was refused, an innumerable people, animated by despair, were prepared to give battle to the besiegers. "The thicker the hay, the easier it is mowed," was the concise reply and the rustic metaphor of Alaric; and he condescended to fix the price of his retreat from Rome at *all* the gold and silver in the city, *all* the rich moveables, and *all* the slaves who could prove their title to the name of BARBARIANS! "If such," said the ministers of the senate, "O king, are your demands, what do you intend to leave us?" "YOUR LIVES," replied the haughty conqueror. But the demands of Alaric gradually relaxed, and he consented to raise the siege on the immediate payment of five thousand pounds of gold, of thirty thousand pounds of silver, of four thousand robes of silk, of three thousand pieces of fine scarlet cloth, and of three thousand pounds weight of pepper. The city with difficulty satisfied the rapacious demands of the Gothic monarch, whose army, enriched by the contributions of the capital, and reinforced by the accession of forty thousand barbarian slaves who had broken the chains

chains of servitude, slowly advanced
A. D. 409. into the fruitful country of Tuscany ;
where Alaric was joined by a chosen band of
Goths and Huns, who, conducted from the Da-
nube to the Tyber by Adolphus the brother of
his wife, had cut their way with some difficulty
and loss through the superior numbers of the
imperial troops.

In the midst of this apparent prosperity, the
king of the Goths repeatedly declared that it was
his desire to be considered as the friend of the
Romans. Three senators, as ambassadors, were
dispatched to the court of Ravenna with his pro-
posals ; the barbarian still aspired to the rank of
master-general of the west, and shewed a disposi-
tion to content himself with Noricum, a province
perpetually exposed to the inroads of the Ger-
mans ; but the obstinacy of Olympius disappoint-
ed the hopes of peace ; the Roman ambassadors
were dismissed under the conduct of a military es-
cort : Six thousand Dalmatians were ordered to
march from Ravenna to Rome, through a coun-
try occupied by myriads of the barbarians ; these
brave legionaries fell a sacrifice to ministerial folly ;
and their general, Valens, with a hundred soldiers
only escaped from the field of battle : Yet Ala-
ric, disdaining this impotent attempt, renewed his
negociations ; and the second embassy of the Ro-
man

man senate was guarded from the dangers of the road by a detachment of Gothic soldiers.

The power of Olympius was undermined by the intrigues of the palace, and the government of Honorius was transferred by the favourite eunuchs to Jovius, the Prætorian præfect: A treaty which that minister, perhaps from criminal motives, negotiated with Alaric in a personal interview under the walls of Rimini, was defeated by the arts of the courtiers; the emperor was persuaded, during the absence of the præfect, to subscribe a letter, in which he refused to prostitute the military honours of Rome to the proud demands of a barbarian: This letter was imprudently communicated to Alaric, who, sensible of the insult, broke off the conference. Jovius returning to Ravenna, adopted prudently the fashionable opinions of the court; and induced, by his advice and example, the officers of the state and the army to swear by the *head* of the emperor, that they would pursue with implacable war the enemy of the republic.

Rome was a second time doomed
to expiate the folly of the ministers A. D. 409.
of Honorius, who obstinately rejected all offers
of peace. Alaric, advancing against the city,
possessed himself of the port of Ostia, where the
corn of Africa was deposited in spacious grana-

ries for the use of the capital; and he declared, if the city hesitated to surrender, he would instantly destroy the magazines, on which the life of the Roman people depended. The terror of famine subdued the pride of the senate; they obeyed the Gothic conqueror, who commanded them to elevate a new emperor to the throne of Honorius, and to bestow the imperial purple on Attalus the præfect of the city. The grateful monarch gratified his benefactor with the title of master-general of the west, and Adolphus was raised to the rank of count of the domestics.

The first days of the reign of Attalus were fair and prosperous. An officer of confidence was detached with some troops to secure the obedience of Africa; the cities of Italy, Bologna excepted, submitted to his sway; and Honorius, alarmed at the approach of Alaric to the gates of Ravenna, dispatched Jovius and Valens, his Prætorian præfect and master-general, to acknowledge the election of his competitor, and with proposals to divide the provinces of Italy and the west between the two emperors. These proposals were rejected; and the ambassadors, Jovius and Valens, deserting the cause of their sinking sovereign, devoted their allegiance to the service of his more successful rival. But at the moment that Honorius, astonished at such examples of domestic treason,

treason, prepared to abdicate his dominions, a seasonable reinforcement of four thousand veterans landed unexpectedly in the port of Ravenna. The favourable intelligence from Africa revived the hopes of the son of Theodosius: The troops which Attalus had sent into that province were defeated by the active zeal of Heraclian, who, by vigilantly preventing the exportation of corn and oil, introduced tumult and discontent within the walls of Rome. The failure of the African expedition diminished the reputation of Attalus, and his imprudence in opposing the design of Alaric completed his disgrace. In a large plain near Rimini, and in the presence of a multitude of Romans and barbarians, the wretched emperor was despoiled of the diadem and purple; and these ensigns of royalty were sent by Alaric to Honorius, as the pledge of peace and friendship. The degraded Attalus, enamoured of life, condescended to follow the camp of a capricious barbarian.

But when Alaric had advanced within three miles of Ravenna, his indignation was kindled by the report that Sarus, the personal enemy of Adolphus, and the hereditary foe of the house of Balti, had been received into the palace. The intrepid barbarian, fallying from the gates of Ravenna, cut in pieces a considerable body of the Goths; and the ministers of Honorius, elated by

this advantage, pronounced that Alaric was for ever excluded from the alliance of the emperor. Rome was again the victim of the folly of the court of Ravenna; the king of the Goths, eager for revenge, appeared in arms under the walls of the capital: The Salarian gate was opened by secret conspiracy; at the hour of midnight the inhabitants were awakened by the sound of

A. D. 410. the Gothic trumpet, and the imperial

August 24. city was abandoned to the avarice and licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia. Some houses, which were fired by the Goths in their march through the Salarian gate, communicated their flames to the adjacent buildings; many private and public works of magnificence were destroyed, and the palace of Sallust was reduced by the conflagration to a stately ruin.

But whatever numbers might perish by the unrelenting sword of the barbarians, it is not easy to compute the multitude, who, from an honourable station and affluent fortune, were suddenly reduced to the miserable condition of captives and exiles. The barbarians fixed the redemption of their indigent prisoners at a low price: The captives who were sold in the market would have regained their freedom, which it was impossible for a citizen to alienate; but as the Goths, if they could not sell, might be prompted to murder
their

their prisoners, a wise regulation condemned them to serve five years as the price of their redemption. Many of the senatorian families, who possessed estates in Africa, retired into that province; but the rapacity of count Heraclian was found nearly as intolerable as the cruelty of the Gothic conqueror.

After Alaric had glutted his army A. D. 410.
with the spoils of Rome, on the sixth August. 29.
day he evacuated the city, and advanced along the Apennines into the southern provinces of Italy. Capua and Nola were destroyed by his rage; and with an ardour which could not be quelled by adversity, nor fatiated by success, he had scarce reached the extreme land of Italy, when his desires were attracted by the fruitful prospect of Sicily, and he thence extended his hopes to Africa. The first division of the Goths had hardly embarked for Sicily, when their courage was daunted, and their transports scattered by a sudden tempest; and the whole design was defeated by the premature death of Alaric, which fixed, A. D. 410.
after a short illness, the fatal term of his conquests. The ferocious character of the barbarians was displayed in the funeral of the hero: By the labour of a captive multitude they diverted the course of the Busentinus, a small river that washes the walls of Consentia; the royal sepulchre, adorn-

ed with the spoils and trophies of Rome, was constructed in the vacant bed ; and the secret spot was concealed by the inhuman massacre of the prisoners who had been employed in the work !

The brave Adolphus, brother-in-law of the deceased monarch, was unanimously elected to succeed to his throne. His

A. D. 412.

pacific view extended to restore, rather than to subvert the Roman empire ; and the ministers of Honorius, who were now released from their extravagant oath, readily accepted the services of the Goths, against the tyrants and barbarians who infested the provinces beyond the Alps. Adolphus, assuming the character of a Roman general, marched to the southern provinces of Gaul ; his troops soon obtained possession of the cities of Narbonne, Thoulouse, and Bourdeaux ; and, though repulsed from the walls of Marseilles by count Boniface, they soon extended their quarters from the Mediterranean to the Ocean ; the violence of the Goths was palliated by the specious pretence that the cities they attacked were in a state of rebellion against the government of Honorius.

The attachment of Adolphus to the cause of the republic, was secured by the ascendant which a Roman princess had attained over the heart of the barbarian king. Placidia, the daughter of the great Theodosius, and of Galla, his second wife,

was

was about twenty years of age, and resided in Rome when the city was first invested by the arms of Alaric. The barbarians detained the sister of Honorius, but her treatment was decent and respectful; her youth, elegant manner, and insinuating disposition made a deep impression on the mind of Adolphus: The ministers of Honorius rejected the proffered alliance of the Gothic king with disdain, but Placidia herself yielded, without reluctance, to the desires of a young and valiant prince. The marriage of Adolphus and the daughter of Theodosius was consummated before the Goths left Italy, but was celebrated at Narbonne; and Attalus, so long the sport of fortune, was appointed to lead the chorus of the hymenæal song. The provincials rejoiced in an alliance which tempered by the mild influence of love the fierce spirit of their Gothic lord.

A. D. 414.

A series of prudent regulations scarce in seven years restored the splendour of Rome and the tranquillity of Italy; and in this interval, the peace of the province had been disturbed by the hostile armaments of Heraclian, count of Africa, who, after supporting the cause of Honorius with active loyalty, was tempted, in the year of his consulship, to assume the title of emperor. The fleet with which he cast anchor at the mouth of the Tyber, amounted to the incre-

A. D. 417.

dible number of three thousand two hundred vessels; yet with this formidable force, the usurper made but a feeble impression on the provinces of his rival. A. D. 413. Heraclian was encountered and routed on the road to Rome, by one of the imperial captains; and deserting his fortune and his friends, ignominiously fled with a single ship. When he landed at Carthage, he found the whole province had relinquished his cause, and returned to its allegiance. The unworthy candidate for sovereign power was beheaded in the ancient temple of Memory, and the remains of his private fortune were granted to the brave Constantius, who had defended the throne which he afterwards shared with his feeble sovereign.

The usurpation of Constantine, who received A. D. 409, 413. the purple from the legions of Britain, had proved successful, and he extorted from the court of Ravenna the ratification of his rebellious claims. He had engaged to deliver Italy from the Goths; but after advancing to the river Po, he returned to celebrate at Arles, a vain and ostentatious triumph. His prosperity was interrupted by the revolt of count Gerontius, who had been left to command in the provinces of Spain. This general, after placing the diadem on the head of his friend Maximus, who fixed his residence at
Tar-

Tarragona, advanced with rapidity through the Pyrenees, to surprise Constantine and his son Constantians, who was already associated to the purple. The royal youth was made prisoner at Vienna, and instantly put to death ; the father escaped to Arles. The siege of that city was immediately formed, but the progress of it was interrupted by the approach of an Italian army, commanded by Constantius, and sanctioned by the authority of the lawful emperor Honorius. Gerontius, abandoned by his troops, escaped to the confines of Spain ; his house, in the night, was surrounded by a body of his perfidious soldiers, and the gallant rebel, after a bloody defence, in which he was assisted by his wife and a friend of the nation of the Alani, and having, at the request of the two last, cut off their heads to preserve them from the insults of the enemy, ended his own life by sheathing a dagger in his heart. The unprotected Maximus was preserved from death by contempt ; and after being elevated a second time to the throne, by the caprice of the barbarians who ravaged Spain, was resigned to the justice of Honorius, and publicly executed.

The general Constantius, who had raised by his approach the siege of Arles, was by birth a Roman ; and the strength and majesty conspicuous in his person marked him, in the popular

pular opinion, as worthy of the throne he afterwards ascended. In his manners he was cheerful and engaging; but when the trumpet summoned him to arms, his animated eyes struck terror into his foes, and inspired his soldiers with the assurance of victory. The emperor Constantine, after enjoying an anxious respite, was again besieged in his capital by this formidable adversary; but this interval had allowed him to negotiate with the Franks and Alemanni. At the head of an army of these barbarians, his ambassador, Edobic, soon returned to raise the siege of Arles. The army of Edobic was defeated by the valour of Constantius and the skill of Ulphilas, his lieutenant; Edobic was assassinated by a faithless friend, to whose house he had escaped. The magnanimity of Constantius bestowed just praises on the merit of Ulphilas, but he sternly commanded the assassin of Edobic to depart from a camp which he considered as polluted by his presence. Constantine, who from the walls of Arles had beheld the ruin of his last hopes, was tempted to place some confidence in so generous a conqueror; he exacted a solemn promise of personal security, and opened the gates of the city. But the integrity of Constantius was superseded by the doctrines of policy; the abdicated monarch and his son Julian were sent under a strong guard

guard towards Italy, but were intercepted on the road by the ministers of death.

A rapid succession of usurpers continued to arise. Before Constantine A. D.
411, 416. resigned the purple, in the fourth month of the siege of Arles, intelligence was received that Jovinus, at the instigation of Goar, king of the Alani, and of Guntarius, king of the Burgundians, had assumed the diadem at Mentz, and was advancing with a formidable host of barbarians from the banks of the Rhine to those of the Rhone. It appears, Constantius resigned without a struggle the possession of Gaul; and that the Goths, who established their quarters in that province two years after the siege of Rome, compelled the degraded Attalus to negotiate an alliance which they formed with the usurper Jovinus. We are soon after surprised to find the purple bestowed on Sebastian, the brother of Jovinus; who, with Attalus, is reproached by Jovinus with imprudently accepting the services of Sarus, the personal foe of Adolphus, and who had retired in disgust from the cause of the emperor Honorius. Adolphus, at the head of ten thousand Goths, advanced to encounter the hereditary enemy of the house of Balti; he attacked Sarus at an unguarded moment when he was only accompanied by eighteen or twenty of his valiant followers, and this band
of

of heroes was oppressed and dispatched by surrounding enemies. The death of Sarus dissolved the alliance which Adolphus had maintained with the usurpers of Gaul: he listened to the persuasions of his wife Placidia; and as a pledge of peace, dispatched to the emperor Honorius the heads of the brothers Jovinus and Sebastian; whose fall, abandoned by their barbarian allies, was attended with the ruin of the single but noble city of Valentia. Attalus, who had been so often degraded and restored, was permitted by the Gothic king to embark in one of the ports of Spain in search of a secure retreat; but he was intercepted at sea, conducted to the feet of Honorius, exposed to the gazing multitude, and, after the amputation of two of his fingers, banished to, and supplied with the decent necessaries of life in, the island of Lipari.

A. D. 409. Spain, about ten months before the sack of Rome by the Goths, was invaded by the joint arms of the Suevi, the Vandals, and the Alani, who poured with irresistible violence from the frontiers of Gaul to the sea of Africa. But Adolphus, when he had restored Gaul to the obedience of his brother Honorius by the deaths of Jovinus and Sebastian, was readily persuaded to turn his arms against the barbarians of Spain. He passed the Pyrenees, and surprised, in the name of the emperor, the

the city of Barcelona: But the course of the victories of the Gothic king was interrupted by domestic treason. He had imprudently received into his service one of the followers of Sarus, whose secret desire of revenging the death of his beloved patron was stimulated by the sarcasms of his insolent master. Adolphus was assassinated in the palace of Barcelona; and by a tumultuous faction, Singeric, the brother of Sarus himself, was seated on the Gothic throne. The first act of the new reign was the murder of the six children of Adolphus by a former marriage; and the daughter of Theodosius was compelled to march above twelve miles on foot before the horse of a barbarian, the assassin of her husband.

But Placidia soon obtained the pleasure of revenge, and the tyrant was assassinated on the seventh day of his usurpation. The free choice of the Gothic nation bestowed the sceptre on Wallia, whose first motions indicated a hostile disposition towards the republic. He marched from Barcelona to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, and, contemplating the coast of Africa, resumed the designs of conquest, which had been interrupted by the death of Alaric. The winds and waves again disappointed the Goths, and the minds of a superstitious people were impressed

A. D. 415.

August

A. D.

415. 418.

pressed by the repeated disasters of storms and shipwrecks. In this disposition Wallia readily accepted the treaty proffered by the ambassadors of Honorius ; he restored Placidia for six hundred thousand measures of wheat, and engaged to draw his sword in the service of the empire. A bloody war was instantly excited among the barbarians of Spain, and the superior achievements of Wallia diffused his renown throughout the empire. He exterminated the Silingi ; he slew in battle the king of the Alani, the remains of whose army sought refuge under the standard of the Vandals ; the Vandals themselves, and the Suevi yielded to the efforts of the invincible Goths. The promiscuous multitude of the barbarians were driven into the mountains of Gallicia ; and Wallia, faithful to his engagements, restored his Spanish conquests to the obedience of Honorius.

A. D. 419. The victorious Goths, after repassing the Pyrenees, were established, according to the faith of treaties, in the possession of the second Aquitain, a maritime province between the Garonne and the Loire, under the jurisdiction of Bourdeaux. That metropolis was regularly built, and advantageously situated for trade ; the inhabitants were distinguished by their wealth, their learning, and their polished manners ; the adjacent country is blessed with a fruitful soil
and

and a temperate climate; and the Goths, after their martial toils, enjoyed the rich vineyards of Aquitain. The limits of their domain were gradually enlarged, and the successors of Alaric fixed their royal residence at Thoulouse.

About the same time, the Burgundians and the Franks obtained a permanent settlement in the provinces of Gaul. To the Burgundians were ceded the lands of the Upper Germany; and by degrees they occupied the two provinces which still retain, with the titles of *Duchy* and of *County*, the national appellation of Burgundy. The Franks were tempted to imitate the conduct of the invaders of the empire, whom they had so long bravely resisted; and their independent powers, multiplying along the banks of the Meuse and the Scheld, insensibly filled the whole extent of the Second, or Lower, Germany. But the ruin of the opulent provinces of Gaul may be dated from the establishment of these barbarians, whose alliance was dangerous and oppressive, and to whose rapacious demands the surviving provincials were compelled to relinquish with a sigh the inheritance of their fathers. Yet the title of *Honorius*, and his successors, was still respected throughout these provinces; and the kings, who exercised a supreme authority over their subjects, continued to solicit the more honourable rank of master-generals of the imperial armies.

The

A. D. 409. The regular forces of Britain had been gradually withdrawn from that island for the protection of Italy, and the province was abandoned without defence to the Saxon pirates, and the savages of Ireland and Caledonia. The Britons assembling in arms, repelled the invaders; and the Armorican provinces (a name which comprehended the maritime countries of Gaul between the Seine and the Loire) imitated the example of the neighbouring island. The independence of Britain and Armorica was soon confirmed by Honorius himself, who in his letters committed to the new states the care of their own safety. After the usurpers of Gaul had fallen, the maritime provinces were restored to the empire; but their obedience was precarious and imperfect; and Armorica, though it could not maintain the form of a republic, was agitated by frequent revolts. Britain was irrecoverably lost; the emperors acquiesced in the independence of a remote province, and the claims of allegiance and

A. D. 409. 449. protection were succeeded by the mutual offices of national friendship. During a period of forty years, till the descent of the Saxons, Britain was ruled by the authority of the clergy, the nobles, and the municipal towns.

The revolt of Britain and Armorica introduced an appearance of liberty into the obedient provin-

ces

ces of Gaul. The emperor Honorius by a solemn edict convened an annual assembly of the *seven provinces*, a name peculiarly appropriated to Aquitain and the ancient Narbonnese. Arles, the seat of government, was appointed for the place of the assembly, which continued from the fifteenth of August to the thirteenth of September of every year. It consisted of the Prætorian præfect of Gaul; seven provincial governors; of the magistrates, and the bishops of about sixty cities, and an indefinite number of the most honourable land-holders. They were impowered to interpret the laws of the sovereign, represent the grievances of the subject, to moderate the weight of taxes, and to deliberate on whatever might tend to the prosperity of the seven provinces. But the tardy application of a remedy, which might formerly have produced the most important effects, was incapable of restoring vigour to an exhausted country; and the emperor Honorius expressed his surprise, that he was reduced to compel by penalties the reluctant provinces to receive the proffered privileges.

CHAPTER XXII.

ARCADIUS EMPEROR OF THE EAST — ADMINISTRATION
AND DISGRACE OF EUTROPIUS — REVOLT OF GAI-
NAS — THEODOSIUS II. EMPEROR OF THE EAST —
HIS SISTER PULCHERIA — HIS WIFE EUDOCIA
— THE PERSIAN WAR AND DIVISION OF
ARMENIA — DEATH OF HONORIUS —
VALENTINIAN III. EMPEROR OF THE
WEST — ADMINISTRATION OF HIS
MOTHER PLACIDIA — ÆTIUS
AND BONIFACE — CONQUEST
OF AFRICA BY THE
VANDALS.

THE empire of the east was finally established by the division of the Roman world between the sons of Theodosius; the sovereign of that empire assumed the vain title of emperor of the ROMANS, and the hereditary appellations of CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS; the form of government was a simple monarchy; and the name of the ROMAN REPUBLIC, which had so long preserved the memory of freedom, was confined to the Latin provinces.

It has been already observed that, after the fall of Rufinus, Eutropius, one of the principal eunuchs, obtained an ascendant over the feeble Arcadius, and was the first of his artificial sex who dared to assume the character of a Roman magistrate and general. The prejudices of the Romans beheld with indignation an eunuch and a slave pollute the *consulship*, though they had long submitted without an effort to his extortion and rapacity: Abundantius, who had early introduced the ungrateful favourite into the palace, was among the first who felt the effects of his power; his fortunes were confiscated, and himself banished to Pityus, on the Euxine, the last frontier of the Roman world. The destruction of Timasius, the master-general of the armies of Theodosius, was a more arduous enterprise; that officer, whose skill and valour had obtained a decisive victory over the Goths of Theffaly, had promoted an infamous dependant of the name of Bargas to the command of a cohort; and Bargas was instigated to accuse his patron of a treasonable correspondence; the influence of Eutropius procured his condemnation; his immense riches became the property of the worthless eunuchs; and Timasius was doomed to perpetual exile at Oasis, a solitary spot amidst the sandy desert of Libya. The ungrateful Bargas was soon after circumvented by

the more powerful villany of the minister himself, who had sense enough to punish the instrument of his crimes. To secure his own person he contrived a law which extended the penalties of treason to those who conspired against the favourites or ministers of the emperor; even *thoughts* and *actions* were declared, by the same edict, equally culpable; and the sons of the guilty were adjudged incapable of inheriting either on the father's or the mother's side, or of receiving any gift or legacy from the testament either of kinsmen or strangers.

Although these sanguinary laws might terrify a spiritless people, they were not capable of restraining the bold enterprise of Tribigild the Ostrogoth. The colony of that warlike people, which had been planted by Theodosius in one of the most fertile districts of Phrygia, impatiently compared the slow returns of husbandry with the successful

A. D. 399. spoils of war: Their leader resented his own ungracious reception in the palace of Constantinople. The inhabitants between the rapid Marfyas and the winding Mæander were astonished by the sound of war, and the trembling provincials fled for refuge to the shores of the Hellespont. The obstinacy of Tribigild, who refused all terms of accommodation, compelled Eutropius to summon a council of war. The defence of Thrace was entrusted to the sword of Gai-
nas,

nas, the Goth; and the command of the Asiatic army to an officer of the name of Leo: two generals, who differently, but effectually, promoted the cause of the rebels. Leo, from the bulk of his body and the dulness of his mind, was surnamed the Ajax of the east. The rashness of the Ostrogoths had drawn them into a disadvantageous station between the rivers Melas and Eurymedon, where they were pressed by the peasants of Pamphylia; but the arrival of the imperial army saved them from destruction, and the negligence of Leo exposed his camp to a fatal surprise from the vigilance and daring courage of Tribigild. The discontent of Gainas was excited by the power of the unworthy Eutropius; instead of opposing, he skilfully adapted his motions to the wishes of the Ostrogoths; and declared to the imperial court his own inability to prosecute the war. He extorted the permission of negotiating with his adversary, and the peremptory demand of the head of Eutropius was among the conditions of peace.

The menaces of Tribigild were seconded by the tears of the empress Eudoxia, who complained of an affront offered to her children by

A. D. 399.

the audacious minister; Arcadius was

soon induced to sign the condemnation of Eutropius, whose immediate death was averted by the sanctuary of the church, and the eloquence of

Saint John Chrysostom. The decrepid eunuch was exiled to Cyprus, but he had scarce touched the shores of that island before he was hastily recalled, and the consul Aurelian pronounced the final sentence, which was executed in the suburbs of Chalcedon.

During this domestic revolution, Gainas had openly revolted from his allegiance, and united his forces with Tribigild, over whom his superior genius maintained the ascendant. The confederate armies advanced from Thyatira in Lydia to the streights of the Hellespont and the Bosphorus. Arcadius was compelled to trust his person and authority to the faith of the barbarians, and a church near Chalcedon was chosen for the place of interview, Aurelian and Saturninus, two ministers of consular rank, were exposed to the terrors of immediate execution, at the demand of the haughty Gainas, who condescended to grant them a precarious respite. The Goths were transported from Asia into Europe, and their victorious chief, who accepted the title of master-general, filled Constantinople with his dependants. The indiscretion of Gainas demanded for his Arian sectaries the possession of a peculiar church; and the pride of the catholics was offended by the public toleration of heresy; the fears of the opulent were more naturally excited by the ardour with which the

the barbarians gazed on the rich shops of the jewellers and bankers: Every quarter of Constantinople was filled with tumult and disorder; the guards and the inhabitants of the city rose in arms. During the absence of Gainas, his troops were surprised and oppressed; seven thousand of the barbarians perished in the bloody massacre; and Gainas was astonished with the intelligence that the flower of his army had been destroyed, that he himself was declared a public enemy, and that his countryman, Fravitta, a loyal confederate, had assumed the management of the war by sea and land. The rebel, after several vain attempts on the cities of Thrace, was pressed by the irresistible attacks of famine to endeavour the passage of the Hellespont: but his intrepid barbarians, who had entrusted themselves on rafts to the waves, were intercepted by the vigilance of Fravitta; and the Roman gallies, bearing down in compact order, covered the Hellespont with the fragments of the Gothic shipwreck. After the loss of so many thousands of his bravest soldiers, Gainas was compelled to relinquish the hopes of conquest, and determined to resume the independence of a savage life; at the head of an active body of cavalry, he rapidly marched towards the Danube, and soon was delivered from the pursuit of Fravitta: But he met and encountered a more

formidable enemy; Uldin, king of the Huns, opposed with superior forces the progress of Gai-

A. D. 401. nas, who was slain with his desperate
January 3d. followers in attempting to cut his way through the hostile ranks.

Arcadius, delivered from the terrors of revolt, resigned himself to the absolute dominion of his wife the fair Eudoxia; but the fame of that empress is sullied by the persecution of St. John Chrysostom, whose merit had promoted him to the archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople. The imprudent bishop from the pulpit had arraigned those female vices which have been attributed to the doubtful character of Eudoxia. Chrysostom was banished, but recalled in two days by the tumultuous rage of his faithful people, and the seasonable interposition of an earthquake; the empress herself acknowledged that the public safety could only be purchased by the restoration of the archbishop: but his return was attended by a repetition of the same language which had excited the former resentment of the court, and more effectual measures were concerted for his final disgrace and ruin. A body of barbarian troops was introduced into the city, to suppress the emotions of the people; the former sentence against the archbishop was confirmed, and Arfacius occupied the archiepiscopal throne. Chrysostom was exiled

to

o the remote town of Cucufus, among the ridges of mount Taurus; and after three years was ordered to be removed by his implacable persecutors to the extreme desert of Pityus: but he sunk under the fatigue of the journey or the cruelty of his guards; and the succeeding generation acknowledged his innocence and merit. Thirty years after his death, his remains were transported to Constantinople; and the emperor Theodosius falling prostrate on the coffin, implored, in the name of his guilty parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia, the forgiveness of the injured saint.

The emperor of the east was more afflicted by the loss of Eudoxia, who was destroyed by the consequences of a miscarriage in the bloom of youth, than by the revolt of his subjects, the incursions of the barbarians, and the destructive effects of earthquakes, conflagrations and famine, which marked his reign with incessant calamity. Three years afterwards, Arcadius, in the thirty-first year of his age, and in the fourteenth of his reign, expired at the palace of A. D. 408.
Constantinople, leaving behind him May 1.

an only son no more than seven years old, and three daughters, Pulcheria, Arcadia, and Marina.

The historian Procopius asserts, that Arcadius bequeathed the protection of his son to Jezdegerd, the Persian monarch; and that the ancient
rival

rival of imperial power discharged his trust with fidelity; but the silence of contemporary writers on so singular an event, annihilates our confidence in the vain tradition; and the government of the eastern empire was assumed and retained for seven years by the præfect Anthemius, who supported by his prudent firmness the reputation of an infant reign. Uldin, who was encamped with a host of barbarians in Thrace, and who rejected all terms of accommodation, was compelled to repass the Danube; Constantinople was protected by new and more extensive walls; and a plan was conceived of establishing a fleet of two hundred and fifty vessels on the Danube, which would have secured the command of that river.

Pulcheria, the sister of Theodosius, only two years older than himself, had, at the age of sixteen, received the title of *Augusta*, and with some doubtful intervals, continued to govern A. D. 414. the eastern empire near forty years, either in the name of her brother, in her own, or in that of her nominal husband Marcian. This singular woman early professed a life of celibacy, and communicated the same resolution to her sisters, Arcadia and Marina; but the devotion of Pulcheria never diverted her attention from temporal affairs, and she alone, of the descendants of the great Theodosius, appears to have inherited any share of his spirit and abilities. Some praise must

must be ascribed to the administration of Pulcheria, that though in the last years of the life of the younger Theodosius the provinces of Europe were afflicted by the arms of Attila, yet the emperor was never reduced to the disgraceful necessity of encountering a rebellious subject.

The judgment of Pulcheria provided, in his twentieth year, a wife for Theodosius, in the celebrated Athenais, the daughter of the Athenian philosopher Leontius ; who, after the death of her father, was compelled by the jealousy or avarice of her brothers, to seek justice or favour from Pulcheria. The merit of Athenais recommended her to the attention of the *Augusta*; the obscure suppliant was easily prevailed on to renounce the errors of Paganism, and she received at her baptism the christian name of Eudocia. Though near twenty eight years old, her beauty inflamed the heart of the emperor, and she was A. D. 421. conducted to the bed of Theodosius ; but the cautious Pulcheria withheld the title of *Augusta*, till the empress had approved her fruitfulness by the birth of a daughter, who, fifteen years afterwards, was married to the emperor of the west.

Eudocia, amidst her new greatness, promoted to the rank of consuls and præfects those brothers who had so much reason to dread her resentment; nor was she negligent in the luxury of
a palace

a palace of those studious acquisitions which first conduced to her elevation. Her writings, which were applauded by a servile age, have not been disdained by impartial criticism; but her glories were terminated by an ungrateful competition for power with her patroness Pulcheria: and the empress, perceiving the affection of Theodosius irremediably lost, requested the permission of retiring to Jerusalem. Even in this solitude the vindictive spirit of Pulcheria pursued her; Saturninus, count of the domestics, was directed to punish with death two of her most favoured servants: Eudocia instantly revenged them by the assassination of the count; and the severity of Theodosius ignominiously stripped the empress of the honours of her rank. The remainder of the life of Eudocia,

about sixteen years, was spent in exile
A. D. 400. and devotion; and she expired at Jerusalem, in the sixty-seventh year of her age, protesting with her last breath, that she had never been guilty of infidelity, the imputation of which seems first to have alienated from her the affections of Theodosius.

The tranquillity of the emperor of the east,
A. D. 422. whose gentle mind was incapable of ambition or renown, was scarcely interrupted by the alarm of a Persian war, originating in the indiscreet zeal of a bishop, who aspired
to

to the crown of martyrdom by destroying, in the last year of the reign of Jezdegerd, one of the fire-temples of Susa. The persecution against the christians, adopted by the Persian monarch in revenge of the insult, was imitated by his son Varranes, or Bahram, who soon afterwards ascended the throne. Some fugitives, who had escaped to the Roman frontier, were demanded and refused; and the refusal, aggravated by commercial disputes, soon kindled a war between the rival monarchies; the operations, however, of two successive campaigns were not productive of any memorable events. A truce of one hundred years was solemnly ratified, and was actually maintained for near fourscore, though the continuance of it was threatened by the subsequent revolutions of Armenia.

In the beginning of the fifth century, Armenia was divided by the progress of war A. D. 431. and faction. Chosroes, the Persian 440. vassal, reigned over the eastern and most extensive portion of the country; the western province acknowledged Arsaces, and the supremacy of the Roman emperor. On the death of Arsaces, the Romans suppressed the regal government, and imposed on their allies the condition of subjects; but the greater part of the nobles, lamenting the loss of their king, negotiated their peace with Persia; and returning to the palace of Artaxata, acknow-

acknowledged Chosroes for their sovereign. About thirty years afterwards, Artasires, nephew and successor of Chosroes, provoked the enmity of his nobles, who solicited unanimously a Persian governor instead of an unworthy king. Bahram listened to their request: By his sentence the descendants of Arsaces were degraded from the royal dignity; and the dominions of the unfortunate Artasires, under the appellation of Persarmenia, were reduced into the form of a province. The jealousy of the Romans was excited by this usurpation, but the rising disputes were terminated by an amicable though unequal partition of the ancient kingdom of Armenia.

During these occurrences in the east, Placidia, daughter of the great Theodosius and the widow of the brave Adolphus, had been united to Constantius, who had vindicated the authority of Honorius from the usurpation of Constantine and the revolt of Gerontius. The gallant general was associated by his sovereign to the empire of the west; and his death, in the seventh month of his reign, instead of diminishing seemed to increase the power of Placidia, by the influence she obtained over the mind of her brother Honorius. On a sudden their suspicious regard was converted into irreconcilable hatred; and soon after the marriage of Theodosius, Placidia and her children fled to Constantinople.

nople. They were received with kindness by the emperor of the east; and within a few months from the arrival of Placidia, the death of Honorius was announced, who expired in consequence of a dropsy, after a reign of twenty-eight years.

While the ministers of the east deliberated, the vacant throne of the west was usurped by a stranger. The name of the rebel was John, who filled the office of principal secretary: Elated by the submission of Italy and the hope of an alliance with the Huns, he dispatched an embassy to Constantinople; but when he understood his agents were refused audience, he prepared to support his claims by arms. Theodosius entrusted the conduct of the Italian expedition to Ardaburius and his son Aspar, who had already signalized their valour against the Persians. Ardaburius embarked with the infantry, and Aspar, at the head of the cavalry, conducted Placidia and her son Valentinian along the sea-coast of the Hadriatic; and by his active diligence surprised the city of Aquileia: Yet amidst his triumph, he was confounded with the intelligence that the imperial fleet was dispersed by a storm, and his father, with two gallies, taken and carried into the port of Ravenna. But this incident facilitated the conquest of Italy; Ardaburius employed the liberty allowed him by John to revive in private a sense
of

of loyalty among the troops ; when the conspiracy was ripe he pressed the approach of his son, who advanced through the morasses of the Po by a secret road. The gates of Ravenna were thrown open, and the tyrant was delivered to the power of the conquerors : his right hand was cut off ; and after he had been exposed, mounted on an ass, to the public derision, John was beheaded in the circus of Aquileia.

Though Theodosius, by the right of consanguinity and conquest, might have reigned the sole emperor of the Romans, he contented himself with the empire of the east, and seated his cousin Valentinian on the throne of the west ; but the western Illyricum was detached from the dominions of the latter, and added to those of the former, and Valentinian was betrothed to Eudoxia the daughter of Theodosius and Athenais ; an engagement which was faithfully accomplished as soon as the lover and the bride attained the age of puberty. Theodosius and Valentinian continued to respect their public and domestic alliance ; but the unity of the Roman government was finally dissolved, and by a positive declaration all future laws were limited to the dominions of their peculiar author.

A. D. 425.

When Valentinian received the title of Augustus he was no more than six years

years of age, and his minority was entrusted to the care of his mother, jealous of her power yet incapable of exerting it; and the character of the unworthy emperor countenances a suspicion that Placidia studiously corrupted his youth by a dissolute education. The armies of the west were commanded by two generals, Ætius and Boniface, whose union might have supported a sinking empire, but whose discord was the immediate cause of the loss of Africa. The former had supported the rebellion of John with an army of sixty thousand Huns; and on the death of the usurper, though he concluded an advantageous treaty with Valentinian, he continued a secret correspondence with his barbarian allies: The latter had maintained with unshaken constancy the cause of loyalty, and contributed by the troops and treasures of Africa to extinguish the rebellion. The experience of their past conduct should have decided the favour of the empress Placidia; but Boniface was absent, and Ætius besieged the palace of Ravenna with assiduous flattery: He deceived his mistress and his absent rival by a subtle stratagem; he persuaded Placidia to recal Boniface; he secretly advised Boniface to disobey the imperial summons, which he represented as a sentence of death; and when the credulous count armed Africa in his defence, Ætius applauded to

the empress his own sagacity in foreseeing the disobedience and rebellion he himself had first suggested. The impossibility of withstanding the forces of the west, commanded by a rival of military reputation, induced Boniface to call to his support, and contract an alliance with Gonderic, the king of the Vandals.

The Vandals and the Suevi, after they were driven into the mountains of Gallicia, maintained a state of mutual hostility, in which the former prevailed; these, quitting their narrow limits, soon after vanquished, near Tarragona, a numerous army of Romans and Goths commanded by the master-general Castinus. Seville and Carthage became the prey of the conquerors; and the vessels which they found in the harbour of Carthage transported them to Majorca and Minorca. The experience of navigation

A. D. 428.

encouraged the Vandals to accept the invitation of count Boniface: The death of Gonderic accelerated the enterprise; his bastard brother, Genferic, a name equally formidable in the Roman annals with those of Alaric and Attila, succeeded to his power. The Vandal king is described to have been of middling stature, and lame of one leg; slow and cautious in his speech, stern and unrelenting in his anger; ambitious without bounds, and without scruples; equally ready

to

to avail himself of his allies, and capable of scattering discord, by his arts, among his enemies. In the moment that he prepared to depart, he heard that Hermanric, king of the Suevi, had presumed to ravage the Spanish territories which he had resolved to abandon. Impatient of the insult, he pursued the retreat of the Suevi as far as Merida, precipitated the king and his army into the river Anas, and then returned to the sea-shore to embark his victorious troops.

The vessels which transported the Vandals over the modern streights of Gibraltar were furnished by the provincials of Spain and the count of Africa; the army of Genferic was augmented by the Alani, over whom he

A. D. 429.

ruled with equal authority, and increased by a number of the bravest of the adventurers of the Gothic nation; yet the amount of these was by no means adequate to the ideas we are apt to entertain of the swarms of barbarians that seemed to issue from the north: the promiscuous multitude, even by the addition of old men, of children and slaves, could scarce be swelled to fourscore thousand persons; but the discontents of Africa fortified the Vandal power with the accession of numerous allies: the Moors, regardless of consequences, embraced the alliance of the enemies of Rome; and the persecution of the religious secta-

ries, called Donatists, by the intolerant zeal of the catholic church, facilitated the enterprize of Genseric, who, though a christian, was an enemy to the orthodox communion.

The court of Ravenna was astonished with the intelligence that a virtuous hero had invited the barbarians to destroy the province entrusted to his command. The friends of Boniface, in the absence of Ætius, solicited a conference with the count of Africa; in the first interview, at Carthage, the fraud of Ætius was instantly detected, and his opposite letters were produced and compared. Placidia and Boniface lamented their mutual

A. D. 430. error, and the count had sufficient magnanimity to confide in the forgiveness of his sovereign. But he soon discovered it was no longer in his power to remedy the disorders he had introduced: Carthage, and the Roman garrisons, returned with their general to the allegiance of Valentinian; but the rest of Africa was distracted with war and faction, and the king of the Vandals sternly refused all terms of accommodation. The band of veterans, with the provincial levies which marched under the standard of Boniface, were defeated by the barbarians; the open country was insulted and destroyed; and Carthage, Cirta, and Hippo Regius, were the only cities that acknowledged the authority of the count of Africa.

Boniface

Boniface beheld with distress the ruin he had occasioned, and which he was no longer able to avert ; after the loss of the battle he retired into Hippo Regius, a maritime city about two hundred miles westward of Carthage, where he sustained a siege of many months. During the commencement of it, his anxious labours were alleviated by the edifying conversation of his friend St. Augustin, who has deservedly been considered as the pillar of the catholic church ; but that bishop was released by death, in the third month of the siege, and in the seventy-sixth year of his age, from the actual and impending calamities of his country.

The siege of Hippo was protracted by the skill of Boniface, and the ignorance of the Vandals, above fourteen months ; and Placidia, alarmed at the danger of Africa, implored the assistance of her eastern ally. Aspar sailed from Constantinople with a powerful armament to reinforce the Italian fleet and army ; the force of the two empires was united under Boniface, and the loss of a second battle decided the fate of the province. Boniface embarked at Hippo, and the vacant places of his soldiers, most of whom were slain, were occupied by the citizens with their families and effects. Placidia received the vanquished general with generous condolence, and raised him to the rank of patrician, and master-

A. D. 431.

ter-general of the armies of the west. But the haughty soul of Ætius was inflamed by the promotion of his rival, and the detection of his own frauds; he hastily returned from Gaul to Italy with a band of barbarian followers; the weakness of the government suffered the two generals to decide their private difference in a bloody battle; Boniface was successful, but he received in the action

A. D. 432. a mortal wound from the spear of his rival, of which he expired in a few days; and with such charitable sentiments towards his adversary, as to advise his wife, a rich heiress of Spain, to take Ætius for a second husband. But the resentment of Placidia proclaimed that general a rebel, and after an ineffectual resistance, he was compelled to retire into Pannonia to the tents of the Huns, among whom, as a hostage, he had spent the years of his youth.

The retreat of Boniface did not complete the subjection of Africa; Carthage still held out against the Vandal king, and Genferic concluded a treaty by which the three Mauritanias acknowledged the authority of the emperor of the west. The domestic enemies of Genferic compelled him to this moderation; his throne was surrounded by foes who asserted the claims of his nephews, the sons of Gonderic, and derided the base birth of their uncle: those nephews with their mother, the widow

widow of the deceased king, were sacrificed to the safety of the Vandal tyrant; and as he had subscribed a solemn treaty with Valentinian in hopes of deriving some advantage from the violation of it, under the protestations of friendship he at length surprised Carthage, eight years A. D. 439. after the defeat of Boniface, and five hundred and eighty-five years after the destruction of the city by the younger Scipio.

CHAPTER XXIII.

**CHARACTER AND CONQUESTS OF ATTLA, KING OF
THE HUNS—DEATH OF THEODOSIUS THE YOUNGER
—ELEVATION OF MARCIAN TO THE EMPIRE OF
THE EAST—INVASION OF GAUL BY ATTLA
—REPULSED BY ÆTIUS—ATTLA INVADES
AND EVACUATES ITALY—THE DEATHS
OF ATTLA, ÆTIUS, AND VALEN-
TINIAN THE THIRD.**

THE Huns, who had been induced by the influence of Ætius to support the cause of John the usurper, encamped within the limits of modern Hungary, and acknowledged the authority of Roas, or Rugilas. The retreat of the barbarians was purchased by the cession of Pannonia; and the arms of Rugilas were directed against the provinces of the east, when his death suspended a treaty which Theodosius had condescended to negotiate with him. Attila and Bleda, the two sons of Mundzuk, and the nephews of Rugilas, succeeded to the throne, and consented to a personal interview with the ministers of Constantinople. In
a spaci-

a spacious plain near the city Margus, in the Upper Mæsia, they dictated the insulting conditions of peace; the annual contribution was raised from three hundred and fifty to seven hundred pounds of gold; a plentiful market on the banks of the Danube was stipulated; eight pieces of gold were paid for every Roman captive who had escaped from his barbarian master; all fugitives who had taken refuge in the provinces of the east were delivered up; and Theodosius solemnly renounced all treaties and engagements with the enemies of the Huns. At the expence of wealth and reputation the emperor of the east purchased a precarious respite, while Attila reduced the rebellious or independent nations of Scythia and Germany.

The features of the barbarian conqueror bore the stamp of his savage origin, and exhibited the genuine deformity of a modern Calmuck; a large head, a swarthy complexion, small eyes, a flat nose, broad shoulders, and a short square body, of nervous strength though of a disproportioned form. He delighted in war, but his head contributed more than his hand to the conquest of the north. A peasant had discovered among the grass an ancient sword, which he presented to Attila, who accepted it with pious gratitude, and calling it the *Sword of Mars*, asserted his claim, as the lawful possessor of it, to the dominion of the earth.

His

His brother Bleda, who reigned over a considerable part of the Huns, first experienced the vigour with which Attila wielded this weapon, and was compelled to resign his scepter and life to the master of the sword of Mars, who united under his sway the two mighty kingdoms of Germany and Scythia.

The best remaining evidence of the victories of the Scythian monarch is the extent of his empire, which stretched towards the north as far as the Danube, and reached on the east to the banks of the river Volga. Of the nations who acknowledged his sovereignty, the Gepidæ and the Ostrogoths were the most distinguished; and their monarchs, Ardaric and Walimir, shared the counsels and friendship of the son of Mundzuk: but the crowd of inferior kings who served under his standard, were ranged in the order of guards and domestics; and when Attila collected his military force, he was able to bring into the field an army of five or seven hundred thousand barbarians.

In the reign of Arcadius, a band of adventurous Huns had advanced along the shores of the Caspian Sea, passed the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Halys, ravaged Cilicia, and even alarmed the citizens of Antioch. The memory of this invasion was still recent in the minds of the Orientalists; a subsequent incursion into Persia had
been

been attended with the repulse of the barbarians; and the ministers of Constantinople flattered themselves that the strength of the Scythian monarch would be employed in a doubtful contest with the princes of the house of Saffian. But they were soon awakened from these fallacious dreams; an enterprise had been concerted between the courts of Ravenna and Constantinople for the recovery of Africa, and the ports of Sicily were already filled with the military and naval forces of Theodosius. The subtle Genferic, to prevent their design, excited the king of the Huns to invade the eastern empire. Attila alledged, that the bishop of Margus had entered his territories to steal a secret treasure, and sternly demanded the guilty prelate and his spoil. The refusal of the Byzantine court was the signal of war; Viminicum and the adjacent towns of Mæsia were destroyed by the barbarians; and the bishop of Margus, to secure his pardon, treated with the enemy, and opened to them the gates of his episcopal city: the line of fortresses which covered the Illyrian frontier was swept away by the inundation of the Huns, who destroyed with fire and sword the cities of Sirmium, Marcianopolis, Naissus, and Sardica. The whole breadth of Europe, above five hundred miles, from the Euxine to the Hadriatic, was desolated by myriads of barbarians.

The

The troops which were destined for the African expedition were hastily recalled, and the Persian frontier was drained of its garrisons; but the inexperience of the generals, and the disobedience of the soldiers, proved equally fatal; and the armies of the eastern empire were vanquished in three successive engagements: the two former, on the banks of the Utus and under the walls of Marcianopolis, were fought in the plains between the Danube and Mount Hæmus; the Chersonesus of Thrace was the scene of the third, and irreparable defeat. The ravages of Attila extended to the suburbs of Constantinople; and though Theodosius and his court were protected by the walls of the capital, yet those walls had been shaken by a recent earthquake; the damage was indeed immediately repaired, but the superstition of the inhabitants suggested the dread, that heaven had delivered the imperial city to the shepherds of Scythia.

The timid policy of the western Romans had abandoned the eastern empire to the Huns; and Theodosius was reduced to solicit the clemency of Attila, who imperiously dictated these humiliating conditions of peace: 1. A territory was resigned along the southern banks of the Danube from Singidunum as far as Novæ, in the diocese of Thrace; and which in
breadth

breadth comprehended the ruined city of Naissus. 2. The tribute was augmented from seven hundred pounds of gold to the annual sum of two thousand one hundred; and six thousand pounds of gold were granted to defray the expences of the war. 3. The emperor of the east consented to restore all the barbarians who had deserted the standard of the king of the Huns; every Roman captive who had presumed to escape from the barbarians, was compelled to purchase his freedom at the price of twelve pieces of gold; and Theodosius publicly confessed, that he was no longer able to protect the suppliants who had embraced his throne, or even his own fugitive subjects, from the irresistible power of the Scythian monarch.

The concessions of Theodosius were rendered more disgraceful by the firmness of a single obscure town. Azimus, a small city of Thrace, was distinguished by the martial spirit of its youth, who, instead of tamely expecting the approach, had attacked in successful sallies the troops of the Huns, and recruited their domestic force with the accession of the deserters. After the conclusion of the treaty, Attila still menaced the empire with war, unless the Azimuntines were compelled to comply with the conditions their sovereign had accepted. The reply of Theodosius, confessed that he no longer possessed any authority over
men

men who had so bravely asserted their own independence; and the monarch of Scythia condescended to negotiate an equal exchange with the citizens of Azimus. The Huns were obliged to swear that they did not detain any prisoners belonging to the city, before they could recover two of their countrymen, whom the Azimuntines reserved as pledges for their lost companions; and Attila, on his side, was satisfied with the solemn asseveration that the rest of the captives had been put to the sword, and that the deserters had been immediately dismissed.

Whilst the spirit of Azimus secured her tranquillity and established her glory, the tameness of the Byzantine court invited a repetition of injuries. Successive embassies were dispatched by Attila to press the execution of the last treaty, and to demand the fugitives still protected by the empire; and the favourites of the king of the Huns, as ambassadors, were enriched at the expence of his enemies. For these oppressive embassies, Attila claimed a suitable return; he weighed with suspicious pride the station of the imperial envoys, and promised that he would advance as far as Sardica to receive any ministers who had been invested with the consular dignity. The council of Theodosius eluded this proposal by representing the ruined condition of Sardica; and Maximin, a respectable courtier, who in the

A. D. 448.

the Persian treaty had assisted Ardaburius, accepted with reluctance the dangerous commission of reconciling the angry spirit of the king of the Huns. Priscus the historian accompanied him; but the guilty secret of the embassy was only entrusted to Vigilius the interpreter. At the same time the ambassadors of Attila, Orestes, and Edecon, returned to the royal camp; their names are rendered illustrious by the fortune of their children; the son of Orestes became the last emperor of the west; the son Edecon the first barbarian king of Italy.

The ambassador of the emperor of the east, with his attendants, after passing the hills of Servia, descended into the flat and marshy grounds which are terminated by the Danube: Over this river they were transported in canoes; but before they could obtain a decisive answer from Attila, they were compelled to undertake a remote journey towards the north, that the Scythian monarch might enjoy the satisfaction of receiving in the same camp the ambassadors of the eastern and western empires; and Maximin slowly proceeded towards the capital of an empire, which did not contain, in the space of several miles, a single city. This capital appears to have been seated between the Danube, the Teyfs, and the Carpathian hills; and though originally no more than an accidental camp,

camp, by the long and frequent residence of Attila it had swelled into a huge village. Some baths, constructed by a Roman architect for Onegesius, the favourite of Attila, were the only edifices of stone. The habitations of the meanest consisted of straw, of mud, or of canvas; the houses of the more illustrious Huns were built of wood, and the situation of each became more honourable as it approached the mansion of the sovereign, which in size and strength surpassed all other houses in his dominions; but though the residence of the Scythian monarch was superior to those of his subjects, yet he relinquished to his people the vanity of displaying the riches attained by their victories, and assumed the superior pride of adhering to the simplicity of his Scythian ancestors. The dress of Attila, his arms, and the furniture of his horse were plain, and of a single colour; his table was served in wooden cups and platters, flesh was his only food, and the conqueror of the north never tasted the luxury of bread. Even in the midst of the intemperate mirth of his nobles, Attila maintained a steadfast and inflexible gravity, which was never relaxed except on the entrance of Irnac, the youngest of his sons, for whom he betrayed a partial affection, justified by the assurance of his prophets, that Irnac would be the future support of his family and empire.

When

When Attila first gave audience to the Roman ambassadors, his tent was encompassed with a formidable guard; his stern countenance and impatient tone astonished the firmness of Maximin; but the guilty Vigilus had more reason to tremble, since he distinctly understood the menace, that if Attila did not respect the law of nations, he would nail the deceitful interpreter to the cross. The anger of the king of the Huns, however, gradually subsided; on the third day the ambassadors were dismissed; the freedom of several captives was granted; and Maximin returning to Constantinople, flattered himself, that by his laborious journey he had contributed to confirm the peace and alliance of the two nations.

But the Roman ambassador was ignorant of the design which was concealed under the mask of public faith. In a secret interview with the eunuch Chrysaphius, who governed the emperor and empire, the death of Attila was proposed to, and undertaken by Edecon. The perfidious conspiracy was negotiated by Vigilus, approved by Theodosius, and revealed on his return by Edecon to Attila. If we review the embassy of Maximin, we must acknowledge the moderation of the barbarian, who respected the laws of hospitality, and dismissed with life the guilty interpreter; but the rashness of Vigilus excites our surprise, who,

conscious of his guilt and danger, accompanied by his son, returned to the royal camp with a weighty purse to satisfy the demands of Edecon, and to corrupt the fidelity of the guards. The guilty interpreter was seized, and ransomed his life by two hundred pounds of gold.

But the indignation of Attila was pointed against the authors of the conspiracy. His ambassadors, Eslaw and Orestes, returned to Constantinople, and entered the palace with the fatal purse depending from the neck of the latter. Chrysaphius, who stood near the throne, was asked, whether he recognized the evidence of his guilt; and Eslaw gravely addressed the emperor of the east in the following words. “ Theodosius is the son of an illustrious
“ and respectable parent; Attila likewise is descended from a noble race; and *he* has supported by his actions the dignity which he inherited from his father Mundzuk: But Theodosius
“ has forfeited his paternal honours, and, by consenting to pay tribute, has degraded himself to the condition of a slave. It is therefore just, that he should reverence the man
“ whom fortune and merit have placed above him, instead of attempting, like a wicked slave, clandestinely to conspire against his master.” The son of Arcadius heard with astonishment the severe language of truth: A solemn embassy was hastily sent to deprecate the wrath of Attila;
and

and his anger was insensibly mollified by the eloquence and liberality of the ambassadors. He condescended to pardon the emperor, the eunuch, and the interpreter; he released a number of captives, abandoned the deserters to their fate, and resigned a large territory to the south of the Danube, which he had already exhausted of its wealth and inhabitants. But this treaty was purchased at an expence which might have supported a vigorous war; and the subjects of Theodosius were oppressed with taxes, to ransom the life of a worthless favourite.

The death of the emperor of the east, by a fall from his horse, in the fiftieth year of his age and the forty-third of his reign, soon followed this humiliating negotiation, and Pulcheria ascended the vacant throne of her brother. The punishment of the obnoxious Chrysaphius was the first act of her reign; but as the empress was sensible of the disadvantage her sex was exposed to, she accepted as her nominal husband, and invested with the imperial purple, Marcian, a senator, about sixty years of age. The new emperor was born in Thrace, and his youth had been severely exercised in poverty and misfortune: he had followed Ardaburius and Aspar to the Persian and African wars; by their influence he obtained the rank of tribune

A. D. 450.

July 28.

A. D. 450.

August 5.

and senator; and his own example gave weight to the laws which he promulgated for the reformation of manners.

To the imperious demands of Attila, Marcian replied with temperate courage. He signified to the barbarians, that they must no longer insult the majesty of Rome by the mention of a tribute; and that if they presumed to violate the public peace, they should feel that he possessed troops and arms, and resolution to repel their attacks. The Scythian monarch threatened to chastise the rash successor of Theodosius; and while mankind awaited his decision in awful suspense, he saluted the two sovereigns of the eastern and western empires with this haughty declaration. "Attila, *my* lord, and *thy* lord, commands thee to provide a palace for his immediate reception." But the barbarian affecting to despise the Romans of the east, turned his arms towards the west; and the particular motives of Attila in this enterprise can only be explained by the state of that empire under the reign of Valentinian.

Ætius, after the death of Boniface, had retired to the tents of the Huns, and his connection with Attila during his exile was afterwards confirmed by mutual gifts, frequent embassies, and the education of Carpilio, the son of Ætius, in the camp of the Scythian monarch. At the head of
sixty

sixty thousand barbarians, Ætius extorted his pardon from the feeble Placidia ; he was promoted to the rank of patrician, thrice invested with the consulship, and assumed, with the title of master of the cavalry and infantry, the whole military power of the state. While Valentinian was permitted to enjoy the peace and luxury of Italy, the patrician supported near twenty years the ruins of the western empire. A seasonable treaty concluded with Genferic protected Italy from the depredations of the Vandals ; the independent Britons implored and acknowledged his salutary aid ; the imperial authority was restored in Gaul and Spain ; and the Franks and Suevi, vanquished in the field, became the confederates of the republic.

A numerous army of the Huns and the Alani, attached to the person of Ætius, was employed in Gaul ; in the southern provinces of that country the kingdom of the Visigoths had gradually acquired strength ; and the ambition of the barbarians engaged the vigilance of the master-general. The Gothic scepter, on the death of Wallia, had devolved on Theodoric, the son of the great Alaric. Impatient of his narrow limits, the king of the Goths aspired to the possession of Arles ; but the city was saved by the activity of Ætius, and Theodoric was persuaded, by a liberal subsidy, to divert his arms to the progress of a Spanish war.

Yet the Goths only waited an opportunity to execute their ambitious views; Narbonne was suddenly besieged; the Belgic provinces were invaded by the Burgundians; and the public safety was menaced on every side by numerous enemies. The indefatigable valour of Ætius and his Scythian cavalry opposed a successful resistance; twenty thousand Burgundians were slain, and the remains of the nation accepted a dependent seat in the mountains of Savoy: Count Litorius, with a detachment of cavalry, cut his way through the besiegers, and relieved the distress of Narbonne; the siege was immediately raised; and the decisive victory over the Goths which followed, is ascribed to the personal valour of Ætius himself. But in the absence of the patrician, who was hastily summoned to Italy, count Litorius unfortunately succeeded to the command; the prediction of the Augurs that he should enter the Gothic capital in triumph, inspired Litorius with fatal confidence; he advanced to the gates of the city, was defeated by his own unskilful rashness, and was actually led through the streets of Tholouse, not in his own, but in a hostile triumph. This loss in a country long since exhausted, could not easily be repaired; the victorious Goths advanced to the banks of the Rhone, and their progress was only checked by the presence of Ætius. But when both
armies

armies expected the signal for engagement, the generals, conscious of each other's force, prudently embraced a sincere and permanent reconciliation. Theodoric was the parent of six valiant sons, and two daughters who were married to the eldest sons of the kings of the Suevi and the Vandals; but these alliances were pregnant with guilt and discord; the queen of the Suevi lamented a husband cruelly murdered by her brother; and the princess of the Vandals was the victim of her father-in-law Genferic: On a suspicion of conspiring against his life, the inhuman tyrant of Africa, after amputating her nose and ears, returned to the court of Thoulouse the daughter of Theodoric. The feelings of a monarch and a father called aloud for revenge; the policy of Ætius proffered the arms and wealth of Italy; and the cruelty of Genferic might have proved fatal to himself, had not his splendid gifts and pressing solicitations inflamed the ambition of Attila to undertake the invasion of Gaul.

The monarchy of the Franks was still confined to the neighbourhood of the Lower Rhine, and these warlike barbarians had established the right of hereditary succession to the throne in the noble family of the Merovingians; their long hair was the ensign of their birth and dignity: Clodion, the first of these princes mentioned in authentic

history, held his residence at Dispargum, a village between Lovain and Bruffels. By the report of his spies, the king of the Franks was informed of the defenceless state of the second Belgic ; he penetrated through the Carbonarian forest, occupied the cities of Tournay and Cambray, and extended his conquests as far as the river Somme. Though he suffered some disgrace from the martial activity of Ætius, who passing the Somme at the head of a detachment of light cavalry surprised the Franks while they celebrated in the plains of Artois the marriage of one of their princes, yet Clodion soon regained his strength and reputation, and maintained possession of his Gallic kingdom from the Rhine to the Somme. After his death the ambition of his sons exposed that kingdom to discord ; Meroveus the younger solicited, and obtained, the protection of Rome, while his elder brother contracted an alliance with Attila, who embraced with pleasure the opportunity which facilitated the passage of the Rhine, and justified the invasion of Gaul.

To his alliance, with the Franks and Vandals, the king of the Huns added a new claim in the character of the lover of Honoria. The sister of Valentinian had been raised, by the title of *Augusta*, above the hopes of the most presumptuous subject ; but the amorous princess disdained the
greatness

greatness which excluded her from the comforts of love, and threw herself into the arms of her chamberlain Eugenius; her pregnancy betrayed her guilt, and the imprudence of her mother Placidia published it to the world, by dismissing her daughter to a remote exile at Constantinople. The unhappy Honoria, impatient of a long celibacy in the irksome society of the sisters of Theodosius, embraced a strange and desperate resolution. The formidable name of Attila was familiar to her; and the daughter of Placidia, sacrificing every duty to revenge, transmitted to the savage monarch a ring, and conjured him to claim her as his lawful spouse. Ambition and avarice supplied the place of love; and Attila, before he invaded Gaul, made a formal demand of the princess Honoria, with an equal share of the imperial patrimony. A firm but temperate refusal was communicated to his ambassadors; and Honoria, after her connection with the king of the Huns was discovered, was sent to Italy; the ceremony of her marriage was performed with a nominal husband, and the sister of Valentinian was immured in a perpetual prison.

The kings and nations of Germany and Scythia obeyed the summons, and crowded to the standard of Attila; from the royal village, in the plains of Hungary, he moved to the conflux of the Rhine and Necker, where he was joined by the
elder

elder son of Clodion and the Franks who adhered to him. The Hercynian forest supplied materials for a bridge of boats, and the hostile myriads were poured into the Belgic provinces. The inhabitants of Metz were involved in a promiscuous massacre, and the buildings were consumed by the flames. After crossing the Seine, Attila advanced into the heart of Gaul; and, on the invitation of Sangiban, the perfidious king of the Alani, who had promised to revolt from the service of the empire, fixed his camp under the walls of Orleans; the ramparts of that city were already shaken by the battering rams, when the impatient squadrons of Ætius and Theodoric were beheld in deep array, pressing forwards to the relief of it.

The facility with which Attila had penetrated into the heart of Gaul may be ascribed to his insidious policy; his public declarations were skillfully mitigated by private assurances; and the measures and councils of Ætius, since the death of Placidia, had been embarrassed by a domestic faction. The patrician had scarce passed the Alps with an inconsiderable force, when he was confounded with the intelligence that the Visigoths, instead of hastening to join the standard of the republic, were determined to expect the invader within their own territories. From this resolution they were diverted by the eloquence of
the

the senator Avitus, who represented the injuries their ancestors had received from the Huns, and their interest in opposing the general desolation menaced by the Scythian savages. Theodoric declared he was ready to expose his life and kingdom for the common safety of Gaul; the Visigoths assembled under their aged king, who commanded in person, with his two eldest sons, Torismond and Theodoric, his numerous and valiant people; to these were added, by the diligence of Ætius, the Læti, the Armoricans, the Saxons, the Burgundians, the Alani, and the Franks who followed Meroveus as their lawful prince.

On the approach of this various army the king of the Huns recalled his troops from the pillage of Orleans, which they had already entered; and repassing the Seine, expected the enemy in the plains of Chalons: But in this retreat the vanguard of the Romans and their allies were frequently engaged with the hostile squadrons; in an encounter between the Franks and Gepidæ fifteen thousand of the barbarians are reported to have fallen. Amidst the spacious Catalaunian fields, which spread themselves round Chalons, an height that commanded the camp of Attila was disputed by the two generals; the active valour of Torismond first occupied the summit, and the Goths poured with resistless force on the Huns, who laboured to ascend

ascend the opposite side ; the anxiety of Attila for the loss of this important post, prompted him to consult the reports of his priests and haruspices, who revealed, in mysterious language, his own defeat, with the death of his principal adversary. By accepting the alternative, the barbarian acknowledged the superior merit of Ætius ; but the unusual despondency of the Huns induced their monarch to animate them with a military oration ; he represented to them their past glory, their actual danger, and their future hopes ; he described the Visigoths as the only strength of the enemy, and declared that the Huns might securely trample on the degenerate Romans : to these motives was added the doctrine of predestination ; and the Scythian monarch asserted that the warriors protected by heaven were invulnerable amidst the darts of their enemies ; “ I myself,” continued Attila, “ will throw the first javelin, and the “ wretch who refuses to imitate the example of “ his sovereign, is devoted to inevitable death.” The spirit of the barbarians was rekindled by the voice of their leader, who immediately formed his order of battle. In person, at the head of his Huns, he occupied the centre line ; the right wing was commanded by Ardaric, king of Gepidæ ; the three valiant brothers who reigned over the Ostrogoths were posted on the left, to oppose

the kindred tribes of the Visigoths. The disposition of Ætius was regulated from different motives; Sangiban, the faithless king of the Alani, was placed in the centre, where his motions could be watched; the patrician himself commanded on the left, and Theodoric on the right; while Torrismond continued to occupy the height which stretched on the flank of the Scythian army.

In the battle of Chalons perished one hundred and sixty-two thousand, or according to another account, three hundred thousand persons; the event of it was decided, not by skilful military evolutions, but the blind valour of undisciplined barbarians. The doubtful centre of the allies was disordered by the flight of the Alani, and pierced by the desperate fury of the Huns, who wheeling to the left, directed their whole force against the Visigoths. The death of Theodoric, who as he rode along the ranks received a mortal stroke from a javelin, served to explain the ambiguous prophecy of the haruspices; and while Attila exulted in the prospect of victory, the remainder of the prediction was verified by Torrismond, who with his squadrons descending like a torrent from the hills, burst through the hostile ranks of the Huns. Attila, after exposing his person with daring valour, was compelled to retreat; and his dismounted followers fortified themselves within the circle of
their

their waggons; the rich furniture of the cavalry was collected into a funeral pile; and the magnanimous barbarian resolved, if his entrenchments should be forced, to rush headlong into the flames.

But his enemies passed the night in equal disorder; the inconsiderate courage of Torrismond engaged him among the Scythian waggons, and nearly proved fatal to him; Ætius, on the left, separated from his allies, was ignorant of their fate till the dawn of day, when he observed with secret satisfaction that the principal loss had fallen on the barbarians. The body of Theodoric was discovered among the slain, and his funeral rites were celebrated with melancholy magnificence; his son Torrismond with his sceptre, accepted the obligation of revenge; but the Goths were repeatedly repulsed by the arrows and resolution of Attila. The dilatory measure of reducing the enemy by famine was disappointed by the impatience of the Visigoths; and the policy of Ætius, who dreaded lest the pride of the Goths might become dangerous after the extirpation of the Huns, influenced Theodoric to return and occupy the throne and treasures of Thoulouse. Attila, after the departure of the Goths and the separation of the allied army, remained some days within the circle of his waggons, and his retreat beyond the Rhine confessed the last victory achieved in the name of the western empire.

But

But the defeat of Attila had neither impaired his spirit nor forces; in the ensuing spring he again demanded Honoria, and her patrimonial treasures. His demand was again refused; the indignant hero took the field, passed the Alps, and invested the walls of Aquileia: but the strength of that city employed, for three months, the arms of the Scythian monarch without effect; the clamours of his troops compelled him to issue orders for their retreat; but when the signal was already given, as he rode pensive around the walls, he observed a stork preparing to leave her nest; the sagacious statesman exclaimed, that such a domestic bird would never leave her habitation, unless those towers were devoted to ruin. The siege was resumed with fresh vigour; a breach was made in the part of the walls whence the stork took her flight; the Huns mounted to the assault, and scarce a vestige was left to discover where Aquileia once stood. Altinum, Concordia, and Padua, experienced the same fate; Milan and Pavia submitted; but the inhabitants of the Venetian cities found a safe refuge in the neighbouring islands; and Attila, whose ferocious pride boasted that the grass never grew where his horse trod, undesignedly laid the foundations of a republic, which revived in Europe the art and spirit of commercial industry.

The

The effeminate Italians trembled at the approach of Attila ; the Goths who had defended Gaul refused to march to the relief of Italy ; Ætius, alone incapable of fear, at the head of his domestic troops harassed the march of the king of the Huns ; but Valentinian hastily retired from Ravenna to Rome, and by quitting an inaccessible fortress for an open capital, betrayed his intention of abandoning Italy to provide for the security of his own person. The emperor of the west was preserved from this disgrace, by deprecating the wrath of the Scythian monarch. This important commission was entrusted to Avienus, who held the first rank in the Roman senate ; to Trigetius, the Prætorian præfect of Italy ; and to Leo, the bishop of Rome. The deliverance of Italy was purchased by the immense dowry of the princess Honoria ; the progress of disease among the army of the barbarians might facilitate the treaty ; and the mind of Attila, superior to real danger, was assaulted by superstitious terrors : he was reminded by his friends and enemies, that Alaric had not long survived the conquest of the eternal city ; and the conqueror of the north is supposed to have yielded to the menacing apparitions of St. Peter and St. Paul.

When the Scythian monarch retired, he threatened to return more dreadful, if the princess Honoria

noria was not delivered to his ambassadors within the term stipulated in the treaty; but his respect for the sister of Valentinian did not prevent the amorous barbarian from adding a beautiful maid, whose name was Idlico, to the long list of his wives. The marriage was celebrated at his palace beyond the Danube; the king retired from the banquet to the nuptial bed: his attendants, on entering the royal apartment the ensuing day, discovered the bride lamenting her own danger, as well as the death of the king; an artery had burst during the night, and as Attila lay in A. D. 453. a supine posture he was suffocated by a torrent of blood. His funeral was celebrated with savage pomp; his remains were inclosed in three coffins, of gold, of silver, and of iron; the spoils of nations were thrown into the grave; and the captives who had opened the ground were inhumanly massacred.

The death of the Scythian monarch was attended by the destruction of his empire; his sons disputed the command of the nations of Germany and Scythia; Ardaric, the warlike king of the Gepidæ, represented the disgrace of this servile partition, and with the three valiant brothers who commanded the Ostrogoths, encouraged his allies to assert their freedom. Ellac, the eldest son of

Attila, lost his life in the battle of Netad; his brother Dengisich, with a formidable army of Huns, maintained his ground on the banks of the Danube above fifteen years; the victor, Ardaric, occupied the late palace of Attila, with the country of Dacia, from the Carpathian hills to the Euxine; the Pannonian conquests were possessed by the Ostrogoths; and Dengisich, encompassed on every side by the slaves of his father, was urged against the eastern empire; he fell in battle, and his head was exhibited a grateful spectacle to the people of Constantinople. Irnac, whom Attila had fondly believed was destined to perpetuate the glories of his race, retired with his subject hords into the heart of the lesser Scythia, who were soon overwhelmed by a torrent of new barbarians.

A. D. 454. The patrician Ætius did not long survive the Scythian monarch. The mind of Valentinian, though insensible to glory, was easily imprest with distrust and jealousy; his new favourite, the eunuch Heraclius, readily persuaded him to undermine, in the life of his general, the support of his throne. Gaudentius, the son of Ætius, was contracted to Eudoxia, the emperor's daughter; the indiscreet behaviour of the patrician offended the sovereign, and while he urged with intemperate violence the proposed marriage,

marriage, Valentinian drawing his sword, the first sword he had ever drawn, plunged it in the bosom of Ætius; his example was followed by the servile eunuchs; and the general who had saved the empire, pierced by innumerable wounds, fell in the presence of his royal master. The unsuspecting friends of the patrician were summoned to the palace and separately murdered, and the contempt long entertained for Valentinian was converted into abhorrence.

The feeble disposition of the emperor of the west would possibly have exposed him an easy prey to the first bold usurper, but his vices precipitated his ruin, and he be-

A. D. 455.

came the immediate victim to the revenge of a noble and injured subject. The wife of Petronius Maximus, a wealthy senator of the Anician family, excited the impure desires of the tyrant; her resistance inflamed his passions, and he resolved to gratify them by stratagem or force. Maximus had delivered to Valentinian his ring, as a pledge for a considerable sum lost at play; the emperor sent it by a trusty messenger to his wife, with an order, in her husband's name, that she should attend the empress Eudoxia. The unsuspecting fair one entered the imperial palace, and Valentinian violated without remorse the laws of hospitality; her tears, on her return, betrayed the

guilty secret to Maximus; her reproaches inflamed his desire for revenge. Two barbarians, who were attached to the memory of Ætius, were admitted among the guards of the tyrant, and presented themselves as the ready ministers of vengeance; they rushed upon Valentinian in the field of Mars, and without resistance from his numerous train dispatched, with their daggers, the emperor and the eunuch Heraclius. Such was the merited fate of the last Roman prince of the family of Theodosius; during a long reign of thirty years, the subjects of Valentinian had reason to despise and dread a sovereign whose weakness of disposition was not even alleviated by the innocence of his intentions.

 CHAPTER XXIV.

SACK OF ROME BY GENSERIC, KING OF THE VANDALS
 —SUCCESSION OF THE LAST EMPERORS OF THE
 WEST, MAXIMUS, AVITUS, MAJORIAN, SEVERUS,
 ANTHEMIUS, OLYBRIUS, GLYCERIUS, NEPOS,
 AUGUSTULUS—EXTINCTION OF THE WES-
 TERN EMPIRE—REIGN OF ODOACER,
 THE FIRST BARBARIAN KING OF
 ITALY—CONVERSION OF THE
 BARBARIANS.

ON the affassination of Valentinian, A. D. 455.
 Petronius Maximus was unanimously March 17.
 saluted emperor by the senate; his short reign of
 three months was embittered by remorse and guilt,
 and when he accepted the purple he relinquished
 for ever that happiness which had so eminently
 distinguished his private life. Policy sanctioned the
 marriage of his son Palladius with the eldest daugh-
 ter of the late emperor; and on the seasonable death
 of his own wife, his blind impulse for revenge com-
 pelled the empress Eudoxia to submit to the em-

braces of an usurper, whom she considered as the assassin of her deceased husband : These suspicions were soon justified by the indiscreet confession of Maximus; and the exasperated Eudoxia, hopeless of assistance from the east, secretly implored the aid of the king of the Vandals. Genseric, during the invasion of the Roman empire by the Huns, had sedulously employed the interval in creating a naval power; the woods of mount Atlas afforded an inexhaustible nursery for timber, and his new subjects of Africa were skilled in the arts of ship-building and navigation; he embraced the fair opportunity of disguising his rapacious designs under the specious names of justice and compassion; he equipped a numerous fleet of Moors and Vandals, and after a successful navigation cast anchor at the mouth of the Tyber.

The abilities of Maximus, which had rendered him respectable in private life, were not equal to the administration of a sinking empire; though informed of the preparations, he expected the approach of the enemy with supine indifference; and when the Vandals disembarked, he resolved on, and recommended to the senators, the disgraceful measure of a precipitate retreat. But no sooner did Maximus appear in the streets, than he was assaulted by a shower of stones; the sword

A. D. 455. of a Roman or Burgundian soldier
June 12. avenged the wrongs of Eudoxia, and
termi-

terminated the misery of a feeble and transient reign.

On the third day after the death of Maximus, Genferic advanced to the gates of the defenceless capital ; the intercession and eloquence of Leo the bishop obtained an ineffectual promise from the barbarian, to spare the unresisting multitude, to protect the buildings from fire, and to exempt the captives from torture. A. D. 455.
June 15.

Rome and its inhabitants were delivered to the licentiousness of the Moors and Vandals ; the pillage lasted fourteen days and nights ; and whatever yet remained of public or of private wealth was diligently transported to the vessels of Genferic. Eudoxia, who advanced to meet her new ally, soon had reason to lament the imprudence of her conduct ; the unfortunate empress, with her two daughters, were compelled to follow the Vandal conqueror, who immediately hoisting sail returned triumphant to Carthage.

Avitus, whose eloquence on the invasion of Attila had roused to arms the Visigoths, was entrusted by Maximus with the general command of the forces of Gaul ; while he visited as an ambassador the court of Theodoric, the king of the Goths, he was astonished by the intelligence that the emperor Maximus was slain, and that Rome was pillaged by the Vandals. The Visigoths loved

the person of Avitus, and respected his virtues; nor were they insensible to the honour of filling the vacant throne. The annual assembly of the seven provinces, which was held at Arles, naturally inclined to the most illustrious of their countrymen;

A. D. 455. Avitus accepted the imperial purple
August 15. from the representatives of Gaul; the

consent of Marcian, the emperor of the east, was easily obtained; and Rome and Italy were long habituated publicly to submit, though they might privately murmur.

Theodoric, the friend and patron of Avitus, had acquired the Gothic sceptre by the murder of his elder brother Torrismond, who had displayed his valour in the memorable battle of Chalons; the exploits of Theodoric soon convinced the world he had not degenerated from his warlike ancestors. The Suevi, after the departure of the Vandals, had aspired to the conquest of Spain; the ambassador of Avitus offered them advantageous terms of alliance and peace; and Theodoric enforced the offers by a declaration, that unless his brother-in-law, the king of the Suevi retired, he should be forced to arm in the cause of Rome. "Tell him," replied the haughty Rechiarius, "that I despise his friendship and his arms; but that I shall soon try, whether he will dare to expect my arrival under the walls of Thoulouse."

The

The indignant Theodoric, after stipulating with Avitus the absolute possession of his Spanish conquests, passed the Pyre-
A. D. 456.
nees to meet the bold challenger. The nation of the Suevi was vanquished, and almost exterminated, on the banks of the Urbicus, about twelve miles from Astorga. Braga, their metropolis, submitted to the victor; and Rechiarius, who had escaped to a sea port, was delivered to, and put to death by, the king of the Goths. But while the Gothic monarch conquered in the name of Avitus, the reign of Avitus had expired; and the honour and interest of Theodoric were wounded by the disgrace of a friend whom he had promoted to the throne of the west.

The emperor Avitus, at the solicitations of his subjects, had fixed his residence at Rome; but the senate beheld with disgust the stranger of Gaul adorned with the imperial purple. The murmurs of that impotent assembly would have died away without effect, had they not been supported by the power of count Ricimer, by his mother's side the grandson of Wallia, and on his father's descended from the nation of the Suevi. Entrusted with the defence of Italy, his important services rendered him more formidable; and on his return from destroying, on the coast of Corsica, a considerable fleet of the Vandals, he signified to Avitus
that

A. D. 456. that his feeble reign was at an end.
Oct. 16. The monarch descending from the throne, hoped to find security at least in the sacred character of bishop of Placentia ; but even in this holy station the hatred of the senate pursued him, and he was at last sacrificed at Auvergne to their implacable resentment.

During the vacancy that succeeded the abdication of Avitus, Ricimer governed Italy with the title of patrician, and resigned to Majorian, the companion of the glory of Ætius, the conspicuous station of master-general of the cavalry and infantry. The merit of Majorian induced the barbarian to comply with the unanimous wish of the Romans ; and after an interval of four months the master-general, who had displayed his skill and valour in a victory over the Alemanni, was elevated to the imperial dignity. His letter to the senate, on his election, displayed sentiments which Trajan would not have disclaimed ; and the virtues of Majorian derived additional lustre from the ignoble conduct of his immediate predecessors.

The laws of the new emperor tended to relieve the fortunes of the oppressed provincials, to preserve the public edifices of the mutilated capital, and to guard the purity of the marriage-bed. His military preparations principally pointed towards the recovery of Africa ; A fleet of the Vandals
and

and Moors had landed at the mouth of the Liris; but the barbarians were surprised by the imperial troops, and chased with slaughter to their ships. For the invasion of Africa, the fame and liberality of Majorian attracted the savage tribes of the remote north; many thousands of the Gepidæ, the Ostrogoths, the Suevi, and the Alani assembled in the plains of Liguria. In the midst of a severe winter, they were conducted over the Alps by the emperor in person, who led the way in complete armour, and afterwards vanquished and admitted to his alliance the valiant king of the Goths.

But the necessity of establishing a maritime power did not escape the observation of Majorian; the woods of the Apennine were felled; the manufactures and arsenals of Ravenna and Misenum were restored; and the imperial navy, of three hundred gallies, was collected in the capacious harbour of Carthagenæ. The historian Procopius affirms the emperor, anxious to explore the state of the Vandals, visited Carthage in disguise, and in the character of his own ambassador was entertained and dismissed by Genferic. The artifices of Genferic seemed at length exhausted; the Vandal tyrant sued in vain for peace; and his desperate measure of reducing Mauritania to a desert, proves how much he apprehended the impending invasion:

But

But the fears of Genferic were dissipated, and the hopes of Majorian blasted, by the treachery of the subjects of the latter. Guided by their intelligence, the African usurper surpris'd the unguarded fleet in the bay of Carthagena; and the preparations of three years were destroyed in a single day. The Vandal, even after this disaster, renewed his solicitations for peace; and Majorian consented to it, in the full assurance of fresh provocations before he could restore his navy: But an impetuous sedition, privately fomented by count Ricimer, who envied the fame and virtues of the emperor, prevented the designs of Majorian; he was compelled to resign the sceptre; five days after his resignation, it was

A. D. 461. reported that he died of a dysentery;
August 7. and with his life terminated the hopes of Italy and Rome.

Ricimer, that he might not in future be offended by superior merit, raised from an obscure situation to the throne Libius Severus; but his dominions were bounded by the Alps, and this phantom of an emperor was disdained by Marcellinus and Ægidius; the first of whom, with a band of faithful followers, occupied Pannonia; and the last maintained his independent sovereignty beyond the Alps. When the Franks were disgusted by the follies of Childeric, they proclaimed Ægidius their king; but this prudent general re-
signed

signed the title as soon as they repented of the injury they had offered to the Merovingian race. The authority of Ægidius ended only with his life; but his death was not without suspicions of poison, and these suspicions were authorised by the arts and character of Ricimer.

The reign and life of Severus, which terminated as soon as they were inconvenient to Ricimer, were protracted by that barbarian for six years. During this period the kingdom of Italy was afflicted by the incessant depredations of the Vandals; they repeatedly visited the coasts of Spain, Liguria, Tuscany, Campania, Lucania, Epirus, Greece, and Sicily; they subdued the island of Sardinia, and their arms spread desolation from the columns of Hercules to the mouth of the Nile. The war which Genferic prosecuted was justified by a specious pretence; Eudofia, the elder daughter of Eudoxia, whom he led away captive, became the reluctant wife of Hunneric, his eldest son; and the father asserted a legal claim to a proportion of the imperial patrimony. The emperor of the east purchased by a valuable compensation a necessary peace; Eudoxia, and her younger daughter Placidia were restored, and the fury of the Vandals was confined to the western empire. Ricimer, embarrassed with the difficulties of his situation,
in

A. D. 462.

in vain, long solicited the assistance of Constantinople; and as the price of alliance, was at last compelled to accept a master from the choice of the emperor of the east.

Marcian, who had received the hand of Pulcheria, after the death of that princess continued to administer the affairs of the east with vigilance and success. His refusal to draw his sword in defence of the west, is ascribed to a promise that he made when a captive in the power of Genferic. On his death the patrician Aspar might have ascended the throne if he would have subscribed the Nicene creed: His influence raised to it Leo of Thrace, a military tribune, and the principal steward of his household. The temperate firmness of Leo resisted the oppression of his benefactor; and Aspar was astonished to find that his influence could no longer appoint a præfect of Constantinople. He presumed to reproach his sovereign with a breach of promise; "It is not proper," said he, shaking insolently the purple, "that the man who is invested with this garment should be guilty of lying." "Nor is it proper," replied Leo, "that a prince should be compelled to resign his own judgment and the public interest to the will of a subject." Any reconciliation between the monarch and his subject could no longer be sincere: An army of Isauri-

ans

ans gradually introduced into Rome, undermined the power of Aspar; Leo, listening to the complaints of the Italians, resolved to extirpate the tyranny of the Vandals; and declared his alliance with his colleague, Anthemius, whom he invested with the purple of the west.

Anthemius, the grandson of the præfect who had protected with so much ability the infant reign of Theodosius, was raised above the condition of a common subject by his marriage with the daughter of the emperor Marcian; though he might naturally have expected to have succeeded to the throne of his father-in-law, yet he supported his disappointment with patience, and his moderation was rewarded with the empire of

A. D. 467.

the west. The nuptials of his daughter with the patrician Ricimer promised to secure the fidelity of that formidable barbarian; the campaign against the Vandals was opened

A. D. 463.

by a successful enterprise of the præfect Heraclius, who subdued the province of Tripoli, and prepared to join the imperial army under the walls of Carthage. Marcellinus was reconciled to the two emperors; he acknowledged the authority of Anthemius, and expelled the Vandals from the island of Sardinia; and the languid operations of the west added some weight to the immense preparations of the east. The fleet that failed

sailed from Constantinople to Carthage consisted of eleven hundred and thirteen ships, and the number of soldiers and mariners exceeded one hundred thousand men; Basiliscus, the brother of the empress of the east, was entrusted with the important command; and by his guilt, or incapacity, destroyed the glory he had acquired by his exploits against the Scythians.

The troops after a prosperous navigation were landed at Cape Bona, about forty miles from Carthage; the imperial general was supported by the army of Heraclius and the fleet of Marcellinus, and the Vandals were repeatedly vanquished. Had Basiliscus boldly advanced, Carthage must have surrendered: Genferic endeavoured to avert the danger by his wonted artifices; he obtained, and perhaps purchased, a truce of five days. During this short interval the wind became favourable to the Vandal usurper; he manned the largest of his ships with the bravest of his Moors and Vandals, who towed after them several barks filled with combustible materials: These were impelled in the night against the unguarded fleet of the Romans, who were awakened by the sense of their instant danger; and while they laboured to escape the fire-ships, they were assaulted by the gallies of the Vandals. Basiliscus, whose station had been remote from the attack, hastily fled in the beginning

ning of the engagement, and returned to Constantinople with the loss of more than half his fleet and army: The intercession of his sister, the empress Varina, procured his pardon. Heraclius with difficulty effected his retreat through the desert; Marcellinus retired to Sicily, where he was soon after assassinated, perhaps at the instigation of Ricimer, by one of his own captains; and the coasts of Italy, Greece, and Asia were again exposed to the avarice and revenge of Genferic.

The death of Majorian had dissolved the alliance between Theodoric and the republic. The king of the Visigoths obtained immediate possession of the territory of Narbonne; by A. D. 462, the selfish policy of Ricimer he was encouraged to invade the provinces which acknowledged the independent authority of Ægidius: The barbarians were defeated near Orleans, and during the life of the count the progress of the Visigoths was checked; but their ambition was soon rekindled; and in the reign of Euric, who assassinated his brother Theodoric, they passed the Pyrenees, subdued the cities of Saragossa and Pampeluna, carried their arms into the heart of Lusitania, and permitted the Suevi to hold the kingdom of Galicia, under the Gothic monarchy of Spain. In Gaul they were not less successful, and throughout the country that extends from the Pyrenees to

the Rhone and the Loire, Berry and Auvergne were the only dioceses which withstood the victorious arms of Euric. The public confidence was lost; the resources of the state were exhausted; and the Gauls discovered that the emperor who reigned in Italy was incapable of protecting his subjects beyond the Alps.

The public calamities were increased by the discord between Anthemius and Ricimer; that power-

A. D. 471. ful barbarian, impatient of a superior, retired from Rome, fixed his residence

at Milan, and threatened the divided kingdom of Italy with the horrors of civil war. At the intreaties of the nobles of Liguria, he condescended to negotiate; and Epiphanius, the bishop of Pavia, was charged with the commission. The first expressions of Anthemius were those of grief and indignation; after recapitulating the favours bestowed on Ricimer, and the marriage of his daughter to the haughty barbarian, he continued, " Shall I
" now accept his perfidious friendship? Can I
" hope that he will respect the engagements of a
" treaty, who has already violated the duties of
" a son?" But the anger of the emperor evaporated in these passionate exclamations, and Epiphanius returned with the flattering hope that he had restored the peace of Italy. The crafty Ricimer only suspended his designs against Anthemius, whose
throne

throne he prepared secretly to subvert: He augmented his barbarian troops with reinforcements of Burgundians and Suevi; he disclaimed the alliance of the emperor of the east; and advancing from Milan to the banks of Anio, he there expected the arrival of the senator Olybrius, whom he was resolved to invest with the imperial purple.

Olybrius, who was descended from the Anician family, might esteem himself the lawful heir of the western empire; he had married Placidia, the younger daughter of Valentinian, after she was restored by Genferic; and the Vandal, who supported the pretensions of his Roman ally, had assigned the preference of the senate and people to a stranger, as one of his motives for war. When Ricimer meditated the ruin of Anthemius, he tempted Olybrius with the offer of a diadem; and the husband of Placidia yielding to the importunities of his wife and friends, rashly, with the secret connivance of the emperor of the east, preferred the precarious purple to the secure retreat he enjoyed at Constantinople. He landed at the port of Ravenna, and was received in the camp of Ricimer as the sovereign of the western world. A. D. 472.

The patrician had already extended March 23.

his posts from the Anio to the Milvian bridge, and possessed the two quarters of Rome which are

M m 2

separated

separated by the Tyber from the opposite part of the city; but the remainder of Rome, with the majority of the people and senate, adhered to the cause of Anthemius, who, with the support of a Gothic army, was enabled to prolong his own reign and the public distress by a resistance of three months. At length the victorious troops of Ricimer penetrated into the heart of the city; Rome was again exposed to the destructive effects of military rage; and Anthemius, dragged from his concealment, was massacred by the command of his son-in-law, who added another imperial victim to those whom he had already sacrificed. Forty days afterwards Italy was delivered by a

A. D. 472. painful disease from the tyranny of
 August 20. Ricimer, who bequeathed the command of his army to his nephew Gundobald, a prince of the Burgundians; and Olybrius himself,

A. D. 472. whose death does not bear any marks
 Oct. 22. of violence, survived scarce seven months his elevation to the throne of the west.

Leo, who still ruled the empire of the east, was persuaded to promote to the vacant throne of the west Julius Nepos, who, as nephew of Marcellinus, ruled Dalmatia, and had married one of the nieces of the empress Varina. The interval consumed by the indecision of the Byzantine court, allowed Gundobald to invest with the purple

ple Glycerius, an obscure soldier : But the Burgundian prince, recalled beyond the Alps by the pursuit of domestic ambition, permitted Glycerius to exchange the Roman sceptre for the bishopric of Salona ; and Nepos was acknowledged by the senate, by the Italians, and the provincials of Gaul. The auspicious hopes formed of his reign were in less than a year dissipated by the cession of Auvergne to the Visigoths ; and the repose of the Italian emperor was interrupted by a furious sedition of the barbarian confederates, who, under the command of Orestes, advanced from Rome to Ravenna. Nepos, instead of confiding in the strength of that fortress, embarked in his ships, and escaped to his principality of Dalmatia, where, after a doubtful reign of five years, he was assassinated at Salona by the ungrateful Glycerius, who, as the reward of his crime, was translated to the archbishopric of Milan.

The nations who had asserted their independence after the death of Attila, were established in the countries to the north of the Danube, or in the provinces between that river and the Alps ; and the bravest of their youths had enlisted in the army of the confederates, who formed the defence and terror of Italy. Among these was Orestes, who has already been mentioned in this history as the ambassador of Attila ; and who deriving his de-

scient from an illustrious family in Pannonia, when that province was ceded to the Scythian monarch, embraced the service of his lawful sovereign; but on the death of the conqueror he refused to obey the Ostrogoths, who had usurped the dominion of Pannonia, and preferred the patronage of the Italian princes. By the successors of Valentinian he was rapidly advanced in the military profession, and by Nepos himself was elevated to the dignities of patrician and master-general of the troops: These, when Orestes himself declined the purple, readily consented to acknowledge his son Augustulus as emperor of the west; and the power of the patrician seemed confirmed by the royal situation of his son and the abdication of Nepos. But Orestes soon discovered, that the precarious sovereign of Italy was only permitted to chuse, whether he would be the slave or victim of his barbarian mercenaries: These demanded that a *third* part of the lands of Italy should be divided among them, and Orestes determined to encounter the rage of an armed multitude rather than subscribe the ruin of an innocent people. He retired to Pavia, but the fortifications of that city were stormed by the soldiers, led on by Odoacer a bold barbarian, and the rage of the *Confederates* was only appeased by the execution of Orestes.

Odoacer, who had commanded in the late revolution,

lution, was the son of Edecon, the memorable colleague of Orestes in the embassy from Attila to Theodosius. Edecon had listened to a conspiracy against the life of his sovereign, but his apparent guilt was expiated by his merit, and his name is honourably mentioned as the leader of the Scyrri in the unequal contest of the Huns with the Ostrogoths; Edecon, who did not survive this defeat, left two sons, Onulf and Odoacer; Onulf retired to Constantinople, where he sullied the fame he had acquired in arms by the assassination of a generous benefactor: Odoacer led a wandering life among the barbarians of Noricum till he was encouraged by a favourable prediction to proceed to Italy. "Pursue your design," said Severinus, the saint, whose approbation he solicited, "you will soon cast away this coarse garment of skins; and your wealth will be adequate to the liberality of your mind." The success of the barbarian ratified the prophecy; he was admitted, and soon obtained an honourable rank among the guards of the western empire; his manners were gradually polished, his military skill improved; and on the death of Orestes the *confederates* saluted him with the title of king; but he prudently abstained through his whole reign from the use of the purple and diadem, though he disdained to conceal his authority under the useless office of a nominal

M m 4

emperor.

emperor. The feeble Augustulus was directed to signify his resignation to the senate; and that assembly, in a letter to Zeno the emperor of the east, disclaimed the necessity of continuing the imperial succession in Italy, since the majesty of the monarch of Constantinople was sufficient to protect the east and the west; they added, "The republic might safely confide in the civil and military virtues of Odoacer; and they humbly request that the emperor would invest him with the title of patrician and the administration of the diocese of Italy." The prudent Zeno, after some hesitation, complied; he gratefully accepted the imperial ensigns, and entertained a friendly correspondence with the *patrician* Odoacer, whose generous clemency spared the life of Augustulus, and, with a splendid income, assigned him the villa or castle of Lucullus, in Campania, for the place of his retirement.

Odoacer, the first barbarian who reigned in Italy, was not unworthy of the high station to which his valour and fortune had exalted him. In compliance with the prejudices of his subjects, after an interval of seven years, he restored the consulship of the west; and though he declined the ambiguous honour himself, he successively filled the curule chair with eleven of the most illustrious senators. The civil administration of Italy was still

still exercised by the Prætorian præfect; the revenues were collected by the Roman magistrates; and the silence of the catholics attests the toleration they enjoyed under the authority of an Arian monarch. Besides protecting the frontiers of Italy, Odoacer passed the Hadriatic to punish the assassins of the emperor Nepos, and to acquire the province of Dalmatia; he traversed the Alps to rescue the remains of Noricum from Fava, the king of the Rugians, whom he vanquished and led away in triumph to Rome; but his prudence and martial deeds could not restore plenty and population to the exhausted kingdom. His licentious troops claimed, as the price of his elevation, one-third of the landed property of Italy; and the consequence of a compliance with their demands was the misery and desolation of the remainder. The tributary harvests of Africa and Egypt were withdrawn in the division of the empire, and the number of inhabitants was continually diminished with the means of subsistence; pope Gelasius, a subject of Odoacer, affirms that in Æmilia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species was almost extirpated; and famine and pestilence gleaned the miserable refuse that had escaped the edge of the sword: Yet amidst the general distress Odoacer maintained with reputation his situation for fourteen years, till he was compelled

pelled to yield to the superior genius of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, a hero and statesman who equally excelled in the arts of war and civil government.

During the progressive history of civil and military affairs, two events, important in themselves and connected with the decline and fall of the Roman empire, have been unavoidably postponed.

1. The institution of the monastic life ; and, 2. The conversion of the northern barbarians. Egypt, ever fruitful in superstition, was the favourite soil of the gloomy Ascetics, who assumed the various names of monks, of hermits, and of anachorets. Antony, an illiterate youth of the lower parts of Thebais, first executed his monastic penance with original fanaticism ; he boldly advanced into the desert, and fixed his residence on Mount Cobzim near the Red Sea. His austere life attracted the applause of the multitude ; he acquired the friendship of Athanasius, and declined the invitation of the great Constantine. A numerous progeny was soon formed by his example and his lessons ; they multiplied with rapid increase on the sands of Libya and the rocks of Thebais ; to the south of Alexandria, the mountain and adjacent desert of Nitria were peopled by five thousand Anachorets ; the stately city of Oxyrinchus exulted in thirty thousand persons of the monastic profession ;
and

and Egypt boasted that the number of her monks equalled the remainder of her inhabitants. The contagious example of Egypt extended to Palestine, to Pontus, and to Gaul; and the names of Hilarion, of Basil, and of Martin of Tours, were revered and their enthusiasm adopted throughout the different provinces; even the barbarians of Ireland were visited, and the dreary and ungenial Hebrides were peopled by the indefatigable zeal of the Ascetics.

These unhappy exiles from social life were long distinguished by a strict adherence to the rules of their order, or a prompt obedience to the capricious commands of their abbot or superior: Their dress was coarse and simple; they wrapped their head in a cowl, to escape the sight of profane objects; their legs and feet were naked, except in the extreme of winter; and their steps were supported by a long staff; their cells were originally long and narrow huts, and they slept on the ground on a hard mat or a rough blanket. Their rigid fasts and abstemious diet were considered as the best preservatives against the impure desires of the flesh; twelve ounces of bread or biscuit were divided into two frugal repasts of the afternoon and the evening; and it was esteemed a merit, and almost a duty, to abstain from the boiled vegetables provided for the use of the refectory. They
derived

derived their scanty support from their manual labour; and the garden and the fields, which they had rescued from the forest or the morafs, were diligently cultivated by their hands.

Such were the lives of the primitive monks; but their discipline was soon corrupted by profperity, and they gradually assumed the pride of wealth, and at last indulged the luxury of expence. The novice was tempted to bestow his fortune on the society in which he intended to spend the remainder of his life; a pernicious indulgence of the laws permitted him to receive, for their use, any future legacy or inheritance; the estates of the popular monasteries gradually spread over the adjacent country; and Zosimus observes, in the first century of their institution, that for the benefit of the poor, the christian monks had reduced a great part of mankind to a state of beggary. Though noble or wealthy proselytes might gratify the pride or supply the sensual demands of the monastery, yet the empire had more reason to regret the plebeian multitude who fled from useful occupations to the indolent recesses of the cloyster; the laborious peasant, or ingenious mechanic, might there find a secure refuge from imperial oppression; and the pusillanimous youth, too frequently, preferred the penance of a monastic to the dangers of a military life: Rome beheld

beheld with astonishment and indignation whole legions, which might have protected her provinces from the barbarians, buried in religious sanctuaries, or concealed in the solitude of the deserts.

II. The barbarians who subverted the empire of Rome, soon embraced and contributed to establish the christian religion. The Goths were first converted by the pious labours of Ulphilas, who translated the scriptures for the use of his countrymen into their native language. The Visigoths followed the example of their brethren; and the cross was soon adored by the Burgundians in Gaul, the Suevi in Spain, the Vandals in Africa, the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, by the various bands of mercenaries that raised Odoacer to the throne of Italy, and by almost all the barbarians who established their kingdoms on the ruins of the western empire. The holy communion, which united them with their christian brethren in spiritual friendship, might have insensibly contributed to have secured them in the service or the alliance of the Romans; but the prospect of this advantage was obscured by the baneful growth of Arianism; and Ulphilas, the apostle of the Goths, professed that the son was not equal or consubstantial with the father: These tenets were embraced by the Ostrogoths, the Burgundians, the Suevi, and the Vandals.

Vandals. This difference of religion was a perpetual source of jealousy and hatred, and the reproach of barbarian was embittered by the epithet of heretic; yet the catholics of Gaul, Spain, and Italy enjoyed under their Arian monarchs a free exercise of their religion, which was denied by the formidable Genseric to his persecuted subjects of Africa. The example of the Vandal monarch, with the single exception of Hildaric, was invariably and inhumanly followed by his Arian successors; and the sectaries of Athanasius, throughout Africa, were tormented with unrelenting fury, till the Vandal kingdom was subverted by the arms of Belisarius. The arianism of the Ostrogoths was only extinguished with their power; the barbarians of Gaul submitted to the Orthodox dominion of the Franks; but Spain was restored to the catholic church by the voluntary conversion of the Visigoths; and this revolution was hastened by the example of a royal martyr, whom reason may probably style an ungrateful rebel.

A. D. 577. 584. Leovigild, the Gothic monarch of Spain, was beloved by his subjects and feared by his enemies; his eldest son Hermenegild, who was invested by his father with the principality of Bætica, had married Ingundis, the beautiful daughter of Sigebert, king of Austrasia. Ingundis, who had been educated in the Orthodox faith, was persecuted,
and

and at last murdered for her religious constancy by the Arian implacability of Goisvintha, the Gothic queen; the cruel treatment of Ingundis separated Hermenegild from the tenets of Arius, and the heir of the Gothic monarchy was initiated by the archbishop of Seville in the Nicene faith. The rash youth, inflamed by zeal or ambition, was tempted to violate the duties of a son and a subject; he invited the Orthodox Suevi and Franks to the destruction of his native land: but the hopes of the catholics were crushed by the diligence of Leovigild; and the flames of rebellion were finally extinguished by the death of Hermenegild. The inflexible constancy with which that unfortunate prince rejected the Arian communion, as the price of his safety, may excuse the honours which have been paid to the memory of Saint Hermenegild, and contribute to tarnish the glories of the reign of Leovigild.

On the death of that monarch his sceptre descended to his son Recared, the first catholic king of Spain, and who had early embraced the faith of his brother, which he supported with more prudence: He pretended that his father, in his dying moments, had abjured the errors of Arianism; and by his power and artifices the whole body of the Visigoths and Suevi were driven or allured into the pale of the catholic communion.

The

The success of the royal proselyte was rewarded by pope Gregory, surnamed the Great, with the hairs of St. John the Baptist, with a cross which inclosed a small piece of the true wood, and a key that contained some particles of iron which had been scraped from the chains of St. Peter.

The persecution of the Jews soon followed the conversion of the christian kings; that exiled nation had founded some synagogues in Gaul; but Spain, since the time of Hadrian, was filled with their numerous colonies: Their wealth might possibly invite the pious avarice of their masters; and Sisebut, a Gothic king, who reigned in the beginning of the seventh century, compelled, by the menaces of confiscation and torture, ninety thousand Jews to receive the sacrament; the reluctant proselytes were not permitted to abandon their native country, but were constrained externally to profess a religion which they despised. The nation, still the secret enemies of christianity, multiplied in servitude and distress; and the intrigues of the Jews promoted the rapid success of the Arabian conquerors.

CHAPTER XXV.

REVOLUTION OF GAUL—REIGN AND CONVERSION OF
CLOVIS—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRENCH MON-
ARCHY IN GAUL—LAWS OF THE BARBARIANS
—STATE OF THE ROMANS—THE VISI-
GOTHS OF SPAIN—CONQUEST OF BRI-
TAIN BY THE SAXONS.

ODOACER endeavoured to establish his kingdom in Italy by alliances with the most powerful of the barbarians. He resigned to Euric, the king of the Visigoths, all the Roman conquests beyond the Alps, as far as the Rhine and ocean; and under the reign of Euric the Gothic nation might aspire to the monarchy of Spain and Gaul. Arles and Marseilles surrendered to his arms; and the freedom of Auvergne was oppressed by his greatness. The most distant and savage nations respected his power and courted his friendship; and his palace at Bourdeaux was crowded by the ambassadors of the Heruli, the Saxons, the Burgundians, and the Franks. But the growing dominion of the Visigoths was checked by the premature death of Euric; and his son Alaric was an

helpless infant when his adversary Clovis was an ambitious and valiant prince.

Childeric, the father of Clovis, had been hospitably entertained during his exile by the king and queen of the Thuringians; Basina, for such was the expressive name of the latter, escaped, on the restoration of Childeric, from her husband's to her lover's arms; declaring at the same time, that if she knew a man wiser, stronger, or more beautiful than Childeric, that man should have the preference. The offspring of this voluntary union was Clovis, who, on the death of his father, inherited, at fifteen years of age, a limited kingdom, confined to the island of the Batavians, with the dioceses of Tournay and Arras, whose warriors could not exceed in number five thousand. The kindred tribes of the Franks, who had seated themselves along the Belgic rivers, the Scheld, the Meuse, the Moselle, and the Rhine, were governed by their independent princes of the Merovingian race; but though they obeyed in peace the hereditary jurisdiction of their chiefs, yet they were free to follow the standard of a victorious general; and the superior merit of Clovis soon attracted the allegiance of the national confederacy. The strictness of his military discipline restrained the licentious spirit of the barbarians, and the equity with which he distributed the spoils of victory ensured their esteem and obedience.

The

The first exploit of Clovis was the defeat of Syagrius, the son of Ægidius, who inherited from his father the city and diocese of Soissons, and ruled over Rheims, Troyes, Beauvais, and Amiens. Syagrius had been educated in the liberal studies of rhetoric and jurisprudence, and policy engaged him in the familiar use of the German idiom. The independent barbarians resorted to the tribunal of a stranger who explained to them, in their native tongue, the dictates of reason and equity; but the peaceful occupations of Syagrius were interrupted by the hostile defiance of Clovis, who challenged his rival to appoint a day and field of battle. The son of

A. D. 486.

Ægidius accepted the challenge, but the Gallic youth who marched under his standard were incapable of contending with the national valour of the Franks; and Syagrius, after an unsuccessful battle, escaped to the distant court of Thoulouse. The feeble Alaric was unequal to the protection of the unfortunate fugitive; Syagrius was surrendered to the menaces of Clovis, and expired by the hands of the executioner; the Belgic cities submitted to the king of the Franks, who, in the tenth year of his reign, enlarged his dominions towards the east by the conquest of the diocese of Tongres.

The Alemanni had subdued the northern parts of Helvetia; and, from the source of the Rhine

to its conflux with the Mein and Moselle, they commanded on either side of the river. In Gaul, they had spread themselves over the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine; and their invasion of the kingdom of Cologne summoned to the support of his allies the daring son of Childeric. In the plains of Tolbiac, about twenty-four miles from

A. D. 496. Cologne, he encountered, and after an obstinate conflict vanquished, the invaders of Gaul.

The king of the Alemanni was slain in the field; and his trembling subjects were pursued into the heart of their forests by the indefatigable victor. The great Theodoric, who then reigned over Italy, and who had married Alboflæda, the sister of Clovis, congratulated his brother on his victory, but mildly interceded for the unfortunate fugitives. The Gallic territories which had been possessed by the Alemanni, became the prize of the conqueror, whose sovereignty that haughty people was compelled to acknowledge; and to whose indulgence they owed the permission of enjoying their peculiar manners and institutions under the government of official, and at length hereditary dukes. After the conquest of the western provinces, the Franks alone maintained their ancient habitations beyond the Rhine; they gradually subdued and civilised the countries as far as the Elbe and the mountains of Bohemia; and the

the peace of Europe was secured by the obedience of Germany.

Till the thirtieth year of his age, Clovis had continued to worship the gods of his ancestors; his conversion was probably facilitated by his marriage with Clotilda, a niece of the king of Burgundy, who was educated in the

Catholic Faith. In the battle of Tol- A. D. 496.

biac, Clovis had invoked the god of Clotilda and the christians, and his victory disposed him to hear the arguments of Remigius, the eloquent bishop of Rheims. The king of the Franks declared himself satisfied of the truth of the Catholic Faith; he was immediately baptized; his example was readily followed by his devout or loyal subjects; and the zeal of the clergy was interested to extend the dominion of the eldest, or rather the only son of the church.

Although the foundations of the *Armorican* republic had been repeatedly overthrown, yet the people guarded with firmness their domestic freedom, asserted with dignity the Roman name, and resisted the attacks of Clovis, who endeavoured to extend his conquests from the Seine to the Loire.

This successful opposition introduced A. D. 497.
an honourable union; the Franks es-

teemed the valour of the Armoricans, and the Armoricans were reconciled to the religion of the

Franks. The scattered bands of cavalry and infantry, which still retained the title of Roman soldiers, accepted without shame the capitulation proposed by the catholic hero, and their accession increased the strength and spirit of the Franks; but the northern provinces of Gaul were slow and gradual acquisitions, and seemed to have been obtained as much by the policy as by the valour of Clovis.

The kingdom of the Burgundians, which extended from the forest of Vosges to the Alps and the sea of Marseilles, was governed by Gundobald, who, to establish his throne, had sacrificed two brothers, one of whom was the father of Clotilda; Godegisil, a third brother, he still permitted to possess the dependent principality of Geneva. The conversion of Clovis had excited the hopes of the orthodox clergy of Burgundy; and their Arian monarch, desirous to reconcile their differences, convened an assembly of his bishops at Lyons. In the midst of their disputes an abrupt question from the king revealed his apprehensions. "If you truly profess the christian religion," said he, "why do you not restrain the king of the Franks? He has declared war against me, and forms alliances with my enemies for my destruction: A sanguinary and covetous mind is not the symptom of a sincere

“ cere conversion ; let him shew his faith by
 “ his works.” He was answered by Avitus, the
 bishop of Vienna : “ We are ignorant of the
 “ motives and intentions of the king of the
 “ Franks ; but we are taught by scripture, that
 “ the kingdoms which abandon the divine law
 “ are frequently subverted, and that enemies will
 “ arise on every side against those who have made
 “ God their enemy : Return with thy people to
 “ the law of God, and he will give peace and se-
 “ curity to thy dominions.” Gundobald rejected
 the conditions, and dismissed the assembly, after
 complaining that Clovis had privately tempted
 the allegiance of his brother.

The fidelity of Godegesil was already corrupt-
 ed ; he joined the standard of his brother to desert
 him in the day of battle ; and Gundo-
 bald, faintly supported by the disaffect-

A. D. 500.

ed Gauls, yielded to the arms of Clovis, and fled
 from the neighbourhood of Langres to Avignon,
 at the distance of two hundred and fifty miles
 from the scene of slaughter. The king of the
 Franks, discouraged by a long siege, returned to
 his own dominions, after imposing a tribute on
 the king of Burgundy, and compelling him to
 reward his brother's treachery ; but the tri-
 umph of Clovis was clouded by the intelligence
 that Gundobald had surprised and massacred Go-

degefil, who was left with five thousand Franks at Vienna. The son of Childeric dissembled his resentment, however great; he was no longer possessed of those advantages which ensured success in the former war. Gundobald had purchased by his misfortunes the affections of his people; the clergy were flattered by the hopes of his conversion; and Clovis, released from the tribute, accepted the military service of the king of Burgundy, who, to the last moment of his life, suspended by his policy the impending ruin of his kingdom.

Sigismund, who succeeded his father Gundobald, stained the profession of the catholic faith with the blood of an innocent son; and his guilt was punished by the cruelty of the sons of Clovis, who, inflamed by ambition and the intreaties of their mother Clotilda, desirous of avenging her father's wrongs on the family of the assassin, invaded Burgundy. Sigismund was vanquished in a decisive battle, and after a short concealment was betrayed by his subjects, who were desirous of cultivating the favour of their new masters. The captive monarch with his two sons were buried alive in a well, and the Burgundians were permitted to enjoy their national laws under the obligation of tribute and military service.

The

The Goths had beheld with terror and jealousy the rapid progress of the arms of Clovis; the fame of the youthful Alaric was oppressed by his mature competitor; the two monarchs, after a personal interview in an island of the Loire, near Amboise, parted with professions of mutual friendship. But their apparent regard concealed hostile designs; and Clovis, in an assembly of his princes and warriors at Paris, declared his concern to behold the fairest provinces of Gaul still possessed by Arians; and invited his followers to vanquish and divide the territory of the heretics. The Franks applauded the pious principles of their leader; the declarations of Clovis were confirmed by the exhortations of Clotilda; and his military operations were seconded by the wishes and the formidable conspiracy of the catholics. Alaric, to resist these foreign and domestic enemies, collected his forces; and his numerous army of Visigoths was reinforced by bands of the most valiant slaves, while Theodoric, king of Italy, who affected to mediate between the competitors, but whose penetration dreaded the growing power of Clovis, prepared to support the national and religious cause of the Goths.

The youthful warriors of the Visigoths disdained to retreat before the army of the Franks, who had advanced into the neighbourhood of Poitiers; the

the more sedate chieftains advised their king to expect, in the southern provinces of Gaul, the veteran troops of the Ostrogoths, whom Theodoric had dispatched to his assistance. Alaric was perplexed by the various councils: The decisive moments were wasted in idle deliberation; the Goths hastily abandoned an advantageous post, and exposed their retreat by their slow and disorderly motion. About ten miles from Poitiers, Clovis overtook and attacked the Gothic

A. D. 507. army, confused and irresolute; the two

kings encountered each other in single combat, and Alaric fell by the hand of his rival. The brave youths who had clamorously demanded the battle, scorned to survive their sovereign; and the bloody victory of Clovis was attested by a mountain of the slain: The conquest of Aquitaine followed the decisive battle of Poitiers; the civil dissensions of the Goths facilitated the operations of the victor, who besieged

A. D. 508. and overthrew the walls of Angoulême,

and established his winter quarters at Bourdeaux, which had submitted without resistance. The Visigoths were preserved from total extirpation by the powerful protection of Theodoric; the king of the Ostrogoths openly espoused the cause of a vanquished people, and successfully resisted the ambition of Clovis. The Franks were compelled to raise the siege of Arles

con-

considerable loss; and by a subsequent treaty, the Visigoths were permitted to retain the possession of Septimania, a narrow tract of sea coast from the Rhone to the Pyrenees; but Aquitaine, from those mountains to the Loire, was indissolubly united to the kingdom of France.

After the success of the Gothic war, A. D. 510.
Clovis accepted the honours of the consulship: The Romans revered in the person of their master that antique title which the emperors condescended to assume; and the successors of Theodosius, by soliciting the friendship of the victorious barbarian, ratified the usurpation of Gaul. This important concession was more formally declared twenty-five years after the death of Clovis, by a treaty between his sons and the emperor Justinian, who confirmed to the Franks Marseilles and Arles, which had been yielded to them by the Ostrogoths, and acknowledged the sovereignty of the Merovingian princes over the countries beyond the Alps. When the conquests and inheritance of these princes were united by the last survivor of the sons of Clovis, his kingdom, though unequal in wealth and power, extended far beyond the limits of modern France.

The *Salic* law was originally composed by four venerable chieftains of the most powerful tribe of the Franks; this law was afterwards amended by
Clovis;

Clovis, and finally promulgated by Dagobert. The elaborate system of jurisprudence, which has immortalised the name of Justinian, was perfected at the same time that the barbarians of Germany first framed their artless institutions; and though the advantages of the former are apparent to the eye of reason, yet the laws of the barbarians were adapted to their desires and capacities. The Merovingians permitted each people, and each family, to enjoy their domestic institutions; nor were the Romans excluded from this legal toleration; and, in all causes where the parties were of different nations, the plaintiff was obliged to follow the tribunal of the defendant.

The ferocious spirit of the Franks, prompt to avenge their private injuries by arms, induced them to fix a pecuniary fine, as the price of blood. The sum was proportioned to the rank of the victim; the Antrustions, who represented the first order of Franks, were appreciated at six hundred pieces of gold; the noble provincials at three hundred; a meaner Frank at two hundred; but a common Roman might be murdered for one hundred or even fifty pieces of gold. The office of judge was devolved on some illiterate chieftain seldom qualified to discharge the duties of the situation; and the party accused might justify his innocence by summoning to his tribunal a number of witnesses, who solemnly declared their assurance
that

that he was not guilty. The legal number of *compurgators* was multiplied according to the crime; an assassin might be absolved by seventy-two voices; but when the chastity of a queen of France was suspected, three hundred gallant nobles swore that the infant prince had been actually begotten by her deceased husband.

The trial by single combat obtained superior credit and authority; this sanguinary law was introduced into Gaul by the Burgundians, and Gundobald condescended to justify it against the objections of the bishop Avitus. "Is it not true," said the king of Burgundy, "that the event of national wars and private combats is directed by God; and that his providence awards the victory to the juster cause?" By such prevailing arguments the absurd and cruel practice of judicial duels was propagated in all the monarchies in Europe, from Sicily to the Baltic; and at the end of ten centuries the reign of legal violence, notwithstanding the censures of saints and popes, was not totally extinguished.

The Visigoths and Burgundians, who subverted the Roman empire in Gaul, usurped for their use the proportion of two-thirds of the subject lands; but this distribution may be reasonably confined to the peculiar districts of the province where the victors were peaceably planted. In these districts each barbarian was connected by the ties of hospitality

pitality with some Roman provincial ; and to this unwelcome guest, the proprietor was compelled to abandon two-thirds of his patrimony : But it is probable the German, a shepherd and a hunter, contented himself with the spacious range of wood and pasture, and resigned the more profitable portion of the soil to the labour of the husbandman. Even the wealth of the Merovingian princes consisted, like that of their subjects, in an extensive domain ; one hundred and sixty palaces or farms scattered through the different provinces of their kingdom, supplied the hospitable plenty of Clovis and his successors ; and enabled them to reward the fidelity of their brave companions, according to rank or favour, with a benefice, the primitive name and most simple form of feudal possessions. The feeble prerogative of the sovereign long derived some support from the influence of his liberality, since he could resume his gifts at pleasure ; but this precarious tenure was gradually abolished by the independent and rapacious nobles, who established the perpetual property and hereditary succession of their benefices. Besides these royal estates, a large proportion was assigned, in the division of Gaul, of *allodial* and *Salic* lands, the latter of which were equally shared among the male descendants of the Franks.

On the decay of the Merovingian line a new order of tyrants arose in the provinces, who, under the

the appellation of *seniors*, or lords, oppressed the subjects of their peculiar territory. The chase was the sacred privilege of these nobles and their domestic servants; and the train of the barbarian lord was swelled by the numerous captives of his arms, who were condemned to the service of their victorious master: The number of these hereditary bondsmen were continually increased by fresh supplies; and the subjects of the Merovingian kings were allowed to alienate their personal freedom. The poor and the feeble crowded, in times of public disorder, to implore the protection of some powerful chief, and their hasty submission irrevocably fixed their own servile condition and that of their latest posterity. From the reign of Clovis, during five successive centuries, the laws and manners of Gaul uniformly tended to promote the increase, and confirm the duration of personal servitude; and the nobles who claimed their descent from the victorious Franks, asserted their indefeasible right of conquests over a crowd of plebeians, to whom they imputed the disgrace of a Roman or Gallic extraction.

The degenerate Romans of Gaul were exposed to the arms and laws of the ferocious barbarians, who contemptuously insulted their possessions, their freedom, and their safety. A large portion of their lands was exacted for the use of the Franks; but

but they enjoyed the remainder exempt from tribute, and were for ever delivered from the expensive system of imperial despotism. Their private life, in the important concerns of marriage, testaments, and inheritance, was still regulated by the Theodosian code: A discontented Roman might freely aspire to the title and privileges of a barbarian; he was permitted to march in the ranks, and even at the head of the victorious Germans; and three Romans were successively honoured with the title of patrician, and entrusted with the supreme command of Burgundy. During several generations the barbarians were excluded even from the orders of the church, and the clergy of Gaul consisted almost entirely of native provincials. The conquerors received from the vanquished the use of the christian religion, and the Latin language; the intercourse of sacred and social communion at length eradicated the distinction of birth and victory; and the nations of Gaul were gradually confounded under the name and government of the Franks.

The Franks soon imparted to their Gallic subjects a spirit and system of constitutional liberty; by the conquest of Gaul the annual assemblies of the month of March were silently abolished; the monarchy was left without any regular establishment of justice or of revenue; the successors of
Clovis

Clovis wanted resolution to assume the legislative and executive powers ; and the sovereign was only distinguished from his nobles by a more ample privilege of rapine and murder. When the Gothic possessions of Septimania, or Languedoc, were invaded by the troops of Burgundy, Berry, and Auvergne, the leaders of the unsuccessful confederates were reproached for their guilt or neglect by Gontran king of Burgundy ; they pleaded as their excuse the universal corruption of the people. “ No one,” they said, “ any longer fears or respects his king, his duke, or his count ; each man loves to do evil, and freely indulges his criminal intentions ; the most gentle correction provokes an immediate tumult ; and the rash magistrate, who presumes to censure or restrain his seditious subjects, seldom escapes alive from their revenge.” This licentious abuse of freedom is strikingly contrasted with the present obedience of the same nation to the commands of an absolute sovereign.

The Visigoths had resigned to the Franks the greatest part of their Gallic possessions ; but this cession was amply compensated by the easy conquest and secure enjoyment of the provinces of Spain : The monarchy of the Goths soon involved the Suevic kingdom of Gallicia ; and while the prelates of France degenerated into fighting and

hunting barbarians, the bishops of Spain were respected by the public, and by their union established their authority: The regular discipline of the church introduced order and stability into the government of the state; and from the reign of Recared, the first catholic king, frequent national councils were successively convened. The suffragan bishops, and most holy or opulent abbots of Spain, agitated the ecclesiastical questions of doctrine and discipline; and during the first three days of the convocation, the laity were excluded; but on the fourth, the great officers of the palace, the dukes and counts of the provinces, the judges of the cities, and the Gothic nobles, entered the council; and the decrees of heaven were ratified by the consent of the people. The national councils of Toledo tempered the ferocious spirit of the barbarians, and at last ratified the code of laws which had been compiled by a succession of Gothic kings. As long as the Visigoths were satisfied with the rude customs of their ancestors, they indulged their subjects of Aquitain and Spain in the enjoyment of the Roman law; but their gradual improvements in arts and policy encouraged them to supercede these foreign institutions, and to compose a code of laws for the use of a great and united people. These were communicated to the nations of the Spanish monarchy; and the conquerors,

querors, insensibly renouncing the Teutonic idiom, extended to the vanquished Romans the full participation of freedom.

While the kingdoms of the Franks and Visigoths were established in Gaul and Spain, the Saxons achieved the conquest of Britain. Forty years after the dissolution of the Roman government, Vortigern appears to have obtained the supreme command of the cities and princes of Britain: But his kingdom was infested by the vexatious inroads of the Scots and Picts; and Hengist and Horsa, two Saxon chiefs, were invit-

A. D. 449.

ed, as they ranged with three ships along the eastern coast, to the defence of Britain. The Caledonians were repelled by the arms of these auxiliaries; and the Island of Thanet, with a plentiful allowance of clothing and provision, was assigned for the residence of these new allies. The infant power of Hengist was strengthened by the accession of seventeen vessels and five thousand warriors; he craftily suggested to Vortigern the advantages of settling a colony in the neighbourhood of the Picts, and a new fleet of forty ships, under the command of his son and nephew, sailed from Germany, ravaged the Orkneys, and disembarked on the coast of Northumberland. The dangerous disposition of these new neighbours was discovered too late; the Saxons flew to arms,

and three hundred British chiefs were massacred by the faithless barbarians during a treacherous entertainment.

Hengist openly aspired to the conquest of Britain, and exhorted his countrymen to embrace the opportunity. In this enterprize each intrepid chieftain assembled his peculiar followers, and conducted the operations of war according to the dictates of his private interest. In the invasion of Britain, seven victorious leaders assumed the title of kings; seven independent thrones, the Saxon heptarchy, were founded by the conquerors; and seven families, one of which has been continued, by female succession, to our present sovereign, derived their equal lineage from Woden, the god of war. Yet the British island maintained a long, though an unsuccessful struggle, against the formidable pirates; the acquisitions of Hengist, during an active reign of thirty-five years, were confined to the kingdom of Kent; and the colony which he had planted in the north was extirpated by the sword of the Britons. Three martial generations were consumed in establishing the monarchy of the West Saxons, and above an hundred years elapsed before the banners of the victorious invaders were united in the centre of the island. The Britons still beyond the Severn asserted their national freedom, which survived the heptarchy,

heptarchy, and even the monarchy of the Saxons. The bravest of the warriors found a secure refuge in the mountains of Wales; and a band of fugitives acquired a settlement in Gaul, and occupied the western angle of Armorica, which obtained the appellation of the Lesser Britain; and, with the dioceses of Vannes, Rennes, and Nantes, formed a powerful though vassal state, and has been since united to the crown of France.

The resistance of the Britons increased the miseries of conquest and provoked the desolation of the country; the arts and religion, the laws and language, which the Romans had so carefully planted in Britain, were extirpated by their barbarous successors. The proceedings of civil and criminal jurisdiction, the forms of office, the ranks of society, were finally suppressed; and the vanquished were reduced to servitude, and governed by the traditionary customs of the shepherds and pirates of Germany. This strange alteration has persuaded many historians that the provincials of Britain were totally exterminated by the conquerors, and their place supplied by the emigrations of the barbarians, and by the rapid increase of the German colonies: But reason rejects the unnatural supposition that the Saxons of Britain remained alone in the desert which they had subdued; and the concurring testimony of Bede enables us to form a
vague

vague computation, that England was probably cultivated by a million of servants, or *villains*, who were attached to the estates of their landlords.

The independent Britons, who appear to have relapsed into a state of original barbarism, in Wales and Armorica preserved and propagated the Celtic tongue, the native idiom of the west. Ignorant of the arts of peace, they alternately indulged their passions in foreign and domestic war; their poverty allowed them not to procure either shields or helmets, and the inconvenient weight of armour would have retarded their desultory operations; yet Henry II. could assert from experience, that these rude and naked barbarians hesitated not to encounter with undaunted resolution their armed and disciplined enemies.

The fifth century after the christian æra beheld the total extinction of the Roman empire in the west. At that unhappy period the Saxons fiercely struggled with the natives for the possession of Britain; Gaul and Spain were divided between the monarchies of the Franks and Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Suevi and Burgundians; Africa was oppressed by the Vandals, and ravaged by the Moors; Rome and Italy, as far as the banks of the Danube, were exhausted by the lawless arms of warlike barbarians, who assumed
the

the title of *confederates*; and their tyranny was succeeded by the reign of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth. The subjects of the empire were on every side afflicted by the victorious nations of Germany, who established a new system of manners and government in the western countries of Europe; and we shall now proceed briefly to recapitulate the causes which led to so singular a revolution.

The decay of Rome has been frequently assigned to the translation of the seat of empire; but this history has already shewn, that the powers of government were rather divided than removed: Yet the subject was impoverished to supply the luxury of the different courts of Constantinople and Rome; and the jealousy of the former induced her to behold with indifference, if not with satisfaction, the distress of the latter. But the firmness with which the capital of the east resisted for successive centuries the armies of the barbarians, protected the wealth of Asia, and commanded the important streights which connect the Euxine and Mediterranean seas, seems to sanction the judgment of Constantine; and we may impartially pronounce, that the foundation of Constantinople tended rather to procrastinate the fate of the east, than to accelerate the ruin of the west.

The purer doctrines of christianity had at length triumphed

triumphed over the blind credulity of the Pagan, but the victory was unfortunately obscured by the fatal dissensions of the church; the state was distracted by contending religious factions, and the persecuted sects became the secret enemies of their country. The monastic institution buried in the desert or the cloyster that vigour which might have repelled the invaders of the empire; and that wealth which might have been appropriated to the support of the soldier, was destined to maintain an useless multitude, who could only plead the merits of abstinence and chastity: Yet if superstition had not afforded a retreat to effeminacy, the same vice would have tempted the Romans to have deserted their standard from baser motives; the fortunes which were consecrated to the specious demands of charity and devotion, would possibly have been employed in supplying the fictitious demand of pride and luxury; and if the establishment of christianity hastened the ruin of the empire, its mild doctrines broke the violence of the fall, and softened the ferocious temper of the conquerors.

But the savage nations of the globe, the common foes of civilized society, were the fatal enemies of the Roman prosperity, and the implacable adversaries of her power and grandeur. The Romans themselves were ignorant of the extent of their danger; beyond the Rhine and the Danube, the northern countries

countries of Europe were filled with innumerable tribes of hardy hunters and voracious shepherds : These pressed with incessant force and accumulated weight on the yielding barriers of the empire ; and if the foremost were destroyed, the vacant space was replenished by new assailants. Europe has no longer to dread the formidable emigrations of the north ; those countries are now cultivated and civilized : The reign of barbarism is contracted into a narrow span ; and the remnants of Calmucks or Uzbecks can no longer excite the fears of the Europeans. The rude valour of the former barbarians was seconded by personal strength, and an adamant frame ; but this superiority is in a great measure destroyed by the change of the military art, and the invention of gunpowder. Mathematics, chymistry, mechanics, and architecture are all assiduously applied to the service of war ; and Europe is secure from any future irruption of barbarians, since before they can conquer they must cease to be barbarous.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

B O O K S